DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 394 169 EA 027 486

AUTHOR Starratt, Robert J.
TITLE The Drama of Leadership.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-75070-092-0
PUB DATE 93
NOTE 195p.
AVAILABLE FROM Falmer Press, Taylor & Francis, Inc., 1900 Frost Road, Suite 101, Bristol, PA 19007 (paperback: ISBN-0-75070-092-0; clothbound: ISBN-0-75070-0912).
PUB TYPE Books (010) -- Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC08 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Critical Theory; Educational Philosophy; Elementary Secondary Education; *Leadership; *Leadership Qualities; *Management Development; Professional Development; Social Theories
IDENTIFIERS *Postmodernism

ABSTRACT

This book reviews recent developments in the study and theory of leadership and explores new applications. It examines the questions that structuration theory raises for leadership, explores the theory of charisma and critical theory as posing new challenges to the understanding of leadership, and describes the uses of postmodernist theory for a new theory of leadership--a theory informed by theories of drama. The book views leaders as active players in a drama of human survival and fulfillment in a world threatened by irrationality and uncertainty. The leader is viewed as playing the part of director, coach, script writer, player, and critic in the developmental dynamic of institutional life. Proposals for the continuing education of leaders are offered. Three tables, three figures, and an index are included. (LMI)

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The DRAMA OF LEADERSHIP

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The Drama of Leadership

I wish to dedicate this book to my brother, Bruce, who has taught me, both in conversation and in the example of his life, more than I can ever say about drama and theater and leadership.

The Drama of Leadership

Robert J. Starratt

Foreword
by
Professor James MacGregor Burns

The Falmer Press
(A member of the Taylor & Francis Group)
London • Washington, D.C.

UK The Falmer Press, 4 John St., London WC1N 2ET
USA The Falmer Press, Taylor & Francis Inc., 1900 Frost Road, Suite 101, Bristol, PA 19007

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First published 1993
Reprinted 1994

A Catalogue Record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 0 75070 0912
ISBN 0 75070 0920 (pbk)

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data are available on request

Typeset in 12/14pt Bembo
by Graphicraft Typesetters Ltd., Hong Kong

Printed in Great Britain by Burgess Science Press, Basingstoke on paper which has a specified pH value on final paper manufacture of not less than 7.5 and is therefore 'acid free'.

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Foreword

It is hardly possible, especially in an election year, to hear a speech or read an editorial that does not end with a clarion call for leadership. Usually the call ends abruptly with the word 'leadership'; this fine thing is not defined, and one gets the impression that it is some kind of ever-ready supply that can be turned on and off at will like tap water. As for who should offer such leadership — usually it is someone that the speakers or writers already vehemently agree with. What kind of leadership they want, conducted by what processes, channeled through or around what institutions, measured by what values, and tested by what results — all these small details are rarely spelled out.

We should not be impatient with such bold but vague calls for leadership, for even those of us who have long studied the phenomenon called leadership are not agreed on what it is. Oh yes, we recognize that in certain specific situations — military, educational, industrial, political — various persons appear to have taken leadership roles. But, just as we know almost everything about modern presidents but far less about the presidency as an institution, so we know everything about individual leaders at home and abroad and comparatively little about the complex and wide-reaching process called leadership.

It is well, after several years of astonishing changes in forms and structures of leadership around the globe (though not in the United States), to pause and assess what progress we have made in reshaping old and assessing new concepts and theories of leadership. This is one of the major contributions of this volume.

The author does not pretend to offer a breakthrough in grand theorizing about leadership. What he does is to retrieve the building blocks that must constitute the foundations for further conceptual and theoretical advances. These blocks carry such labels as Values, Change, Power, Structure, Action. To these he has proposed intellectual structures in which to assemble these blocks, as well as his own arresting addition — Drama.

Of course the author recognizes that these blocks are not protean entities that can be piled up and reassembled as by children with their play pieces. Rather they are access points for analysis of exceedingly complex motivational forces, power resources, end values, and other phenomena. And this is another prime quality of this book: the recognition that the study of leadership above all calls for the most resourceful use of a variety of disciplines — history, philosophy, psychology, politics, sociology, theology, among others — as the student of leadership tries to comprehend the symbiotic interrelationships of psychological and other forces in the relentless and turbulent flow of change. This is a discriminating study, moreover, that does not get lost in the disciplines and variables; for example, the author employs structural-functional analysis to good advantage, while carefully avoiding the 'equilibrium bias' that marked the Parsonian theory of a few decades past. He must and does avoid such a bias, for above all he is a student of change.

These days we must all be students of change, as we observe those remarkable developments abroad, while perhaps noting the static aspects of our own (US) system of elections, representation, policy-making and leadership. As a kind of 'dramatist of change', the author seeks to understand the global transformations without being mesmerized by them. And he is well aware of the failures of leadership to cope with change — at a time when we are hearing so much about leadership 'excellence', as his chapter on the leadership of flawed institutions suggests. He seeks to reassemble, however, the foundation blocks and convert them into intellectual tools with which we can identify and perhaps explain the now brilliant, now stumbling efforts to direct change in democratic directions the world over. Above all he sees this not as a task simply to be assigned to others — 'Don't just stand there, LEAD!' — but to all students

of leadership in various localities, occupations, and institutions. Thus this book is an invitation to all of *us* as potential leaders — to lead as thinkers, and to think as leaders.

James MacGregor Burns
January 1992

Preface

I have a strange relationship with my books. I begin with an idea, and sometimes an outline of what I want to say. In the process of putting it in words, the text comes out to be something different from what I had anticipated. Sometimes it is all wrong and I have to throw it away, but many times it is better than what I started out with. This book played the same trick on me. It is both more and less than what I had intended. Much of it is better, while some of it is considerably toned down from an over-ambitious outline.

For over thirty years I have been interested in the phenomenon of leadership. I wanted to be a leader, first of all, and did manage to be active in public life. Whether what I did could be considered a process of leadership is for others to judge. Over the years, however, I became more interested in teaching leaders, and in studying what the reality of leadership might be. That led to a variety of involvements with school administrators, primarily, and with others who held leadership positions. After many years of designing a variety of leadership degree programs, courses, workshops, seminars, institutes, and refining my ideas about leadership, I thought it was time to write my book on the topic.

I had been using the metaphor of drama more and more to frame my thoughts on leadership, and hence had decided to entitle the book as it is presently. As I began to write, however, the book kept saying to me, 'This is too superficial. You have to dig deeper'. Digging deeper led me to a reappraisal of the

current literature on leadership. What was missing there, and in my own ideas, without which the book, like a stubborn donkey, was refusing to budge? Gradually I began to see how much I and other scholars of leadership were taking for granted. We were taking for granted the *status quo*. We were assuming that institutional life, described in organizational studies, was the place to start, and within whose categories leadership could be described and understood. Yet, what made institutions be the way they were? Were there dynamics at play beneath what organizational studies were describing? This led me to a variety of social theorists with whose works I had been superficially acquainted, but had never studied in-depth. These studies began to open up fresh perspectives on leadership for me, perspectives which became the substance of this book.

I began to read, as well, in the postmodern literature. It again dawned on me how little my own work and that of many other scholars of leadership took into account the historical crises of the past century. There were real questions for those who would teach aspiring leaders, which had not been adequately posed. How, for example, does one avoid despair and cynicism, given the sorry state of social, political, and corporate life? How to carry on with some kind of hope? How to imagine possibilities? On the other hand, how to get behind easy ideological assumptions which gloss over the underlying problems that leaders must address? How to confront the mess with intelligent analysis in order to see what's gone wrong? It seemed to me that people writing on leadership, myself included, were too busy cheerleading the successes, successes measured by criteria handed to us within the *status quo*. So these hunches led me into other readings which helped form other parts of the book.

Instead of the book being a summary of my understandings of leadership gained over many years of involvement in the field, it turned into a refreshing expansion of my thinking. That makes me somewhat nervous, because I don't know how others in the field will respond to this 'new stuff'. I will simply have to let the reader be the judge.

A word of warning to the reader. Chapter 2 is a foundational chapter for the whole book. I went into extensive detail in

my analysis of Anthony Giddens' work on the duality of action and structure. Most will probably find it somewhat tedious. Your perseverance, however will be rewarded in the following chapters. Another caveat: as have most of my male colleagues, I have wrestled with the stylistic demands of inclusive language. I believe that women have a right to complain over the exclusive use of masculine pronouns and adjectives. I have tried to use inclusive language. I also have decided to follow the lead of some women writers who use the feminine gender throughout their works on the grounds that it is a book written by a women and therefore the generic references will be stated in her gender. Instead of using he/she, therefore, I will occasionally use he as standing for both male and female. No doubt this will displease some readers, but in these perilous times, no author will find universal acceptance in this matter.

I would like to thank several people for the part they played in seeing this book to reality. My wife, Ruth, suffered the discomfort of reading the early drafts of the book and offered a multitude of helpful suggestions. I want to thank Malcolm Clarkson of Falmer Press for his gracious support and encouragement, and my editor, Jacinta Evans for her steady judgment in bringing the book to completion. Finally I want to thank my colleagues and friends in Australia, Davin Day, Colin Moyle, Charles Burford, Brian Caldwell, Tom Maxwell, and Heldly Baere, all of whom have offered encouragement and enthusiasm for my work in leadership, and without whom I might not have had the courage to write this book.

Chapter 1

Exploratory Excursions

This book reports on a series of exploratory excursions, not a set, familiar journey to a familiar destination. It is also a report on those adventures to a presumed audience of map makers, fellow adventurers, and the curious ones who read travel magazines for their sense of cultural geography. On these excursions I have discovered maps of others which helped me to move past the nearby horizon and to locate myself in a larger terrain. Sometimes I was able to lay one map upon another with interesting results. Although the maps did not coincide in every dimension, I was able to see the terrain in greater detail and complexity, as would the placing of a map depicting annual rainfall over a map showing mountains, rivers, and farmlands over a map showing industrial centers. Having returned from these explorations, I think I am better able to discuss with other travelers what the things they might encounter along the way might *mean*, or how they could use a particular map to see things they would miss using a different map. I can also speak to my fellow travel consultants about my excursions. It taught me some new perspectives which our national association of travel consultants were neglecting in their continuing education seminars and training and certification programs. That about sums up what I am trying to do in this book.

As an educator who teaches administrators and managers, and as a consultant who helps administrators think about their problems, I have long been trying to understand leadership. In my university courses I might teach leadership as an academic

subject, covering the various theories and research studies which attempt to map its contours so that, upon completion of the course, participants will know the names of the major theorists and the substance of their theories. However, I want to work with administrators so that they will be able to *practice* leadership, or move beyond their present practice of leadership into something more ambitious, more effective, more encompassing. In order to attempt this more ambitious 'teaching' of leadership, I have to understand what it means, what it might look like if I ever encountered it, what it demands of ordinary and extraordinary people. I need to explore the assumptions I make when I try to define leadership, and certainly the assumptions I make when I try to encourage others to think about their own leadership. Those assumptions are not simply intellectual. They are moral as well.

As Bernard Bass observes, 'From its infancy, the study of history has been the study of leaders.'[1] For better or worse, leaders seem to 'make' history. The understanding of social institutions and social movements, indeed, of whole societies, seems tied up in understanding the leaders of those institutions, movements, and societies. Of course, leaders can do nothing without followers. It is more appropriate, really, to speak of heroic, extraordinary, exceptional *actions* which leaders and followers collectively perform. Nevertheless, what leaders do or do not do seems to matter enormously in the course of human affairs. Therefore those who would educate leaders should know what they are attempting, because the stakes are high.

Yet, as Machiavelli observed in *The Prince*, 'There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things.'[2] Most administrators could recount unexpected and unfounded anxieties they occasioned in members of their organization by slight changes in standard operating procedures. In some situations, introducing even minor changes can incite strong resistance and conflict. So much more will the introduction of 'a new order of things', whether that means a new school curriculum, a new political coalition between previously estranged groups, a new technology into the manufacturing process, create unpredictable

possibilities. Those possibilities include confusion, misunderstandings, violent accusations as well as much happier results. Hence, to encourage the practice of leadership, one needs to discuss the possible range of 'new orders of things' and their potential consequences for the people involved. But such discussions seem to call for an understanding of an enormous array of ideas and systems of ideas. Hence, one who would attempt to educate leaders must be himself or herself very broadly educated.

This book reflects an attempt to educate myself more broadly for the daunting task of educating leaders. Initially that education involved reflecting on my own experience in the field, followed by immersion in the extant literature on leadership. However, the literature would not stand still. In his third edition of the *Handbook of Leadership*, Bass has included 7,500 bibliographic references to works dealing with leadership, and the list grows every year.[3] Nevertheless, over time one can acquire a fairly broad understanding of what most of the literature is covering (even though, buried amidst those 7,500 references is probably an author I have not yet read who has already explored the terrain I intend to cover in this book). After mastering the literature to some extent, I then set out constructing my own theory of leadership, which was a synthesis of much that I had read and of reflections on personal experiences with various types of leaders.[4]

Although initially satisfied with this task of mastering the literature on leadership, and then coming up with my own theory as a basis for teaching courses on leadership, I knew that my understanding was still inadequate. There were too many questions which the literature on leadership, at least the literature I had encountered, had not addressed.

On the other hand, the theory and research on leadership had continued to evolve. It required a constant updating which might yet speak to my unease over my poorly formulated questions. So this exploratory excursion begins there, with a review of the salient, recent developments of ideas in the field of leadership theory and research. That review has helped me to appreciate how far the field has advanced, while, at the same time, clarifying some of my nagging questions. Those

questions, now somewhat clearer, lead to the continuation of the journey reflected in the succeeding chapters — but first to recent developments in the field of leadership.

It is fair to say that the new generation of books on the topic of leadership has broken rather decisively with the more narrowly defined parameters of the past. The previous generation of theories and studies were driven by assumptions about scientific management, rational decision-making, positivist epistemology and behavioristic psychology. From the 1940s through the 1960s the literature had pretty well exhausted the familiar categories used for analyzing leadership: task/relations dichotomies; contingency variables of maturity, cognitive abilities, position power, task structure, zones of indifferences; dedicated, separated and participatory styles of leaders; theory X/theory Y dichotomies, etc. The previous generation of leadership models might be categorized as 'instrumental' models which focused on behavioural and strategy aspects of leadership. There was little concern for the unique substance of leadership, as though styles and skills of leadership would carry the day in all organizations and under most circumstances. The newer generation of leadership theories and models probe the substance of leadership, namely, what was the 'stuff' that leaders dealt with.[5]

Much earlier, Max Weber and subsequently Karl Manheim had developed a useful distinction between functional rationality and substantive rationality in their studies of organizations and societies.[6] This distinction helps us to grasp the difference between the previous and the newer generation of leadership theories. Functional rationality deals with structural differentiation, bureaucratic hierarchicalization and specialization. As societies and organizations are differentiated into more and more sub-units, the original sense of the organization becomes thinned out, weakened, attenuated. Functional or instrumental leadership tends to focus on mechanisms of control, coordination between sub-units, sub-unit tasks and problems. Substantive rationality, by contrast, involves the larger sense of meaning, mission, and identity of the organization as a whole. Substantive leadership, therefore, tends to highlight the larger sense of meaning, mission and identity which motivates and guides the constituents of the society or organization.[7]

In terms of their epistemology and methodology, the newer generation of theorists in leadership tended to move away from the positivist, reductionist behaviorism of the previous generation toward a more descriptive, naturalistic phenomenology of leaders in action. In-depth interviews and organizational narratives tend to substitute for survey questionnaires and statistical analysis. The narrative and 'thick' descriptions tend to present a longitudinal and more dynamic picture of leadership than the static, snap-shot and quantified picture derived from surveys of leaders and subordinates. Analyses of these narratives yield useful generalizations which summarize the dynamic and longitudinal patterns of leaders' activities. These generalizations are illustrated by captivating stories of how various leaders masterminded a turnaround of their individual organizations.

One of the breakthroughs in the literature was signaled by Deal and Kennedy's work on corporate cultures.[8] They described a world of heroes and myths, demons, rituals and ceremonies which exercised a pervasive influence beneath the surface of rationality, technology and efficiency of the organization. These deeper patterns of organizational life make up a tapestry of meaning which they call organizational culture. Leadership in the cultural perspective is exercised not so much by scientific management as by guarding essential values of the culture, by reminding people in the organization of the essential meanings of the culture, by promoting rituals and celebrations which sustain those essential meanings and values of the organization.

That kind of cultural leadership seems to be highlighted by Peter Vaill in his description of leadership as 'purposing'.[9] Purposing, one of the essential activities of the leader in Vaill's theory, means those words, messages and activities of the organization's formal leadership which give clarity, induce consensus and motivate commitment around the organization's basic purposes. In other words, the leader builds a sense of the mission of the organization, tends constantly to speak about the possibilities derived from it, and relates the key activities of the organization to that purpose. The leader comes to embody the values to which the institution is committed, and to invite a common dedication to the achievement of those essential purposes.

John Gardner, in the afternoon of a distinguished career of public service, has recently added to his other outstanding works a new book on leadership.[10] His reflections on the essential characteristics of leadership reach beyond the empirical categories of previous theories. Based on his reading of history as well as his own experience, he postulates six characteristics of leaders which distinguish them from the general run of administrators.

1 Leaders think long-term; they look beyond immediate problems.
2 Leaders look beyond the agency or unit they are leading in order to grasp its relationship to larger realities of the organization as well as the external environment.
3 Leaders reach and influence people beyond their own jurisdiction.
4 Leaders emphasize vision, values and motivation; they intuitively grasp the non-rational and unconscious elements in the leader-constituent interaction.
5 Leaders have political skills to cope with conflicting requirements of multiple constituencies.
6 Leaders never accept the *status quo*; they always think in terms of renewal.

Such a list of leader characteristics reveals how far beyond the previous, one or two variable theories of leadership current thinking has progressed. Likewise it is apparent that Gardner includes, but goes beyond the notion of cultural leadership within organizations to a leadership that is in touch with and influences the external social environment.

Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus have brought the term 'vision' onto center stage in the leadership literature.[11] Analyzing interviews of ninety exceptional leaders in a variety of public and private organizations, they culled four major themes. Leaders:

1 focused their own attention and the attention of others on a vision;
2 communicated through symbol, rhetoric and action the meanings embedded in their vision;

3 positioned themselves strategically within the field of competition to maximize their own organization's strengths;
4 embodied in their own person the quest for the vision through their competence and persistence.

A term like 'vision' would have been rejected by the previous generation of leadership scholars. It is too fuzzy, too difficult to quantify, impossible to operationalize in one or two variables. It smacks of religious fervor. It is something one would associate with that other psychiatrically suspect category, 'charisma'. Yet Bennis and Nanus found it to be the energy source for the leaders they interviewed.

Another ground-breaking book on leadership came from the pen of the historian James McGregor Burns.[12] Reflecting on the lives and activities of various leaders throughout history, Burns develops a distinction between transactional and transformational leadership. Transactional leadership usually involved an exchange of some kind, a granted request here for a future request there, a vote on this in return for a vote on that. These exchanges are governed by instrumental values such as fairness, honesty, loyalty, integrity. The transactional leader ensures that procedures by which people enter into these transactions are clear, above-board, and take into account the rights and needs of the people involved. Transactional activity involves a bargaining, sometimes unspoken, over the individual interests and claims of people going their own separate ways, or, although engaged in collective endeavor, of people motivated primarily by self-interest.

Transformational leadership, on the other hand, seeks to unite people in the pursuit of communal interests beyond their individual interests. Motivating such collective action are large values such as freedom, community, equity, justice, brotherhood. Transformational leadership calls members' attention to the basic purpose of the organization, to the relationship between the organization and the society it serves. Transforming leadership attempts to elevate members' self-centered attitudes, values and beliefs to higher, altruistic attitudes, values and beliefs.

Being an historian, Burns raises the question which most historians ask, namely, are leaders makers of history, or are they made by history. Avoiding the simplistic dichotomy, he argues that the reality of leadership involves an unimaginably complex and pulsating social process with leadership-followership forces flowing throughout, often in multiple cross-currents of conflict. Burns' position comes close to the argument of subsequent chapters of this book. However, he did not set out to answer that question in detail.

His primary analytical categories are political and psychological. On the one hand, he explores the exercise of the leader's power, and the role that conflict plays in enriching the decisions of the group or leader. When he tries to explain the dynamics operating between a transformational leader and the followers, he employs a psychological model derived from Kohlberg's work in cognitive moral development. Transformational leaders, Burns argues, encourage followers to function collectively at a higher moral level, transcending their more self-serving motives for the achievement of some higher common good. He refers also to Maslow's hierarchy of psychological needs, indicating that transformational leaders appeal to the higher order needs such as autonomy and self-actualization of their followers.

Burns, perhaps more than others, has wrestled with larger questions which his thoroughgoing study of leadership raises, questions such as: do leaders really alter the direction of history, or do historical forces, in their impersonal momentum simply absorb the relatively small, idiosyncratic alterations caused by leaders; do leaders lift people beyond their potential, or do they simply call up hitherto unused potential; if the latter, then where does this existing potential for heroic striving, upon which leaders call, come from? Burns' distinction between transformational and transactional leaders has been a major influence on subsequent treatments of leadership.

Tichy and Devana for example, employed Burns' categories in their study of business leaders.[13] They use the metaphor of a three-act play in their description of the pattern they perceived in the transformational leaders they studied. In Act One, the leader recognizes the need for institutional revitalization. In Act Two, the leader creates a new vision. In Act Three, the leader

institutionalizes changes to renew the organization. Their criteria for identifying executives as transformational leaders are primarily financial, such as an increase in the value of their company in dollars, the divestiture of unprofitable products, the willingness to lay off large numbers of employees (up to 85,000 employees in one case) in order to increase productivity and or save the company. While the authors claimed the influence of Burns, they also looked to the literature on business management for additional conceptual grounding of their study. As subsequent chapters should make clear, I have difficulty with their criteria for transformational leadership. Those criteria may be acceptable for 'doing business'; I believe there are other criteria for leadership.

Bernard Bass, well known for his encyclopedic survey of the literature on leadership, has taken Burns' distinction and developed it across many empirical studies by means of a survey instrument he and his colleagues have developed.[14] He agrees with Burns that transformational leaders bring about a change of heart in their followers, a change in their fundamental attitudes, perceptions, values and commitments. Transformational leaders enable subordinates to find fulfillment from striving for and achieving the high goals and purposes the leaders set for them. Such fulfillment leads to greater autonomy and self-confidence. Bass differs from Burns, however, in his contention that transformational and transactional leadership are not necessarily dichotomous; he finds leaders being both transformational and transactional, depending on the circumstances. Bass also differs from Burns in that he is more of a social scientist than a political historian. Bass has a genuine commitment to empirical research and to the quantification of findings about leadership. His research is concerned with relating aspects of leadership to *outcomes*, measurable either by independent criteria, such as financial audits or increases in productivity, or by the testimony of subordinates and colleagues.

Bass claims to have identified through his research four dimensions in transformational leadership: transformational leaders are charismatic (Burns rejects the use of this term as overworn and indeterminate), inspirational, intellectually stimulating, and considerate of individuals. My problem with Bass is that,

after identifying and factoring out these varying dimensions with their behavioral descriptors, he does not go further and ask where these dimensions are grounded, and whether they have a moral base. Bass has indicated a neutral stand on the morality of transformational leadership. Whereas Burns ruled out dictators from being considered transforming leaders, Bass would accept them; what counts is that the followers' attitudes and behavior were transformed, whether for good or evil.[15]

Bass, however, does us a fine service by providing empirical grounding for concepts which earlier researchers claimed were too fuzzy for quantification. Despite the limitations of his research, he has advanced the field enormously by providing empirical credibility to terms such as 'charisma', 'transformational', 'inspirational'.

Conger and Kanungo have continued to pursue the meaning of charismatic leadership, especially in business enterprises. Like Bass, they seek to give empirical grounding to the term charisma.[16] Their research methods, however, took the form of qualitative case studies of executives through semistructured interviews, structured and unstructured observations, and the study of printed documents from the company. Based on their findings, they constructed a behavioral model of how charismatic leaders move their organization from an existing state to some future state through three or four stages (the earlier model of three stages was expanded to comprise four stages). In stage one, the charismatic leader discovers deficiencies and unexploited opportunities in the organization and formulates an idealized strategic vision of what the company needs to do. In the second stage the charismatic leader communicates the vision, indicating how it will move the company beyond the deficiencies of the *status quo*, and motivating subordinates to commit to the vision. Stage three finds the charismatic leader building trust and establishing credibility in her or himself. In stage four, the leader shows the followers how to achieve the vision through modeling, empowerment and unconventional tactics. Their findings echo some of the principles enunciated in a similar book on leadership, especially in business corporations, by Kouzes and Posner.[17]

Conger and Kanungo help us to see that charismatic

leadership is not one *thing*, but is a *process* that stretches over several stages of institutional transformation. They hold that charismatic leaders are those who are involved in all of the stages of the process. Non-charismatic leaders, for example, may have vision, but not the modeling or empowering skills necessary to enable followers to achieve the vision. This awareness of institutional transformation touches upon one of the central notions in charismatic leadership, namely, its routinization.

Two studies of routinization from two distinct organizational worlds, the college and a self-help social movement, provide additional insight into the way charismatic leadership merges into institution-building. Clark examined how the charisma of the college founders was institutionalized into a distinctive institutional identity.[18] He discovered five institutional mechanisms or processes which carried the charisma of the founder:

1 a core of faculty who reflected the founders' ideas in their collegial authority;
2 unusual courses, projects, or teaching methods;
3 alumni who provided outside support;
4 a student culture which passed on the ideas and sense of identity of the institution from one generation to the next;
5 language and imagery in catalogues, ceremonies, written histories, college statutes, etc.

Trice and Beyer, in an attempt to document the process of routinization, studied the foundation of two organizations which dealt with alcoholism.[19] Prior to the study, they analyzed various commentators on Weber's theory of charismatic leadership and summarized studies of charismatic leadership and its routinization. This review, which provides in itself an excellent summary, led them to propose five factors largely responsible for successful routinization of a founder's charisma in a lasting organization. Those factors are as follows:

1 the development of an administrative apparatus which stands apart from the charismatic and puts the charismatic's program into practice;

2 the transformation and transference of the charisma to others in the organization through symbols and ceremonies;
3 the incorporation of the charismatic's message and mission into the written and oral traditions of the institution;
4 selection of a successor who resembles the charismatic;
5 a continued identification with and commitment to the charismatic's original mission.

Their study of the two organizations indicated how variations in these mechanisms of routinization either weakened or strengthened the identity and mission of the organization. Furthermore, their study indicated that charisma and institution are not necessarily antagonistic phenomena. As a matter of fact, institutional vitality appears to require some kind of charismatic presence which energizes and gives purpose to the institution.

In a later chapter, I plan to go into the topic of charismatic leadership in greater detail. Suffice it to note at this point that it has a prominent part in the recent literature on leadership.

Finally, a very recent theme has emerged in the literature on leadership, the theme of chaos, uncertainty, turbulence. Peter Vaill, employing a metaphor from rafting and canoeing, speaks about the state of 'permanent white water' in the business world.[20] Because of the speeding up of information exchange, technological invention, global networking, and intense competition, business leaders will find it increasingly difficult to manage and control their organizations as they had in the past. Vaill contends that it is impossible at present to know the rules of the game, to understand the overall pattern of events. He compares the situation to a newcomer in a foreign city trying to get directions from someone who assumes that the newcomer possesses some knowledge of the landmarks to which he is referring. The newcomer remains at a loss to proceed with any clear sense of direction. Executives will have to unlearn some frames of reference in order to understand new intuitions about the changing landscape. They will have to question all of their assumptions about their work and the environment in which

it takes place. They will have to maintain maximum flexibility in order to be able to respond to the rapidly changing environment.

More than ever, leaders will have to re-examine the way they think about and value human beings. They will have to 'quit cooperating with those who are interested in a theory of human nature only for exploitative, manipulative, and dominative purposes'.[21] Leaders need to reassess how to promote the discovery of spirit within the workplace, especially during a time of permanent white water, where normal relationships are continually disrupted. Their visionary leadership will be one source of spiritual renewal in their organization, and that vision must be concerned with bringing out the best in people — relating to the deepest sense of their spirit.[22]

Vaill seems to be saying that leaders will need a thoroughgoing re-evaluation of themselves, of their beliefs and assumptions, as well as a re-evaluation of the technologies and organizational structures of the institutions they lead because the world is rapidly becoming something other than what we expected. He does not get very specific, but I find his challenge to explore new perspectives inviting. In a sense, that is what this book is all about.

This review of developments in the study of leadership indicates that enormous strides have been taken already. I would summarize some of these advances as follows:

1 Leadership is better understood as a very complex phenomenon which cannot be treated in isolation from the historical social context, nor in isolation from the qualities of followers. Although he is speaking about political leadership, what Burns has to say about the education of followers applies to all forms of institutional life:

> We are talking about the broader subject of the political education of all citizens in democratic environments. . . . Democratic and constitutional processes are heavily dependent on the extent to

> which modal values and end-values are debated in all sectors of society.[23]

Vaill gets at this as well when he proposes that institutions engage all of their members in discussions of five value categories which make up the identity and mission of the institution: the Economic, the Technological, the Communal, the Sociopolitical, and the Transcendental.[24]

2 Leadership is a moral activity. Gardner puts it well: Leaders

> express the values that hold society together. Most important, they can conceive and articulate goals that lift people out of their petty preoccupations, carry them above the conflicts that tear a society apart, and unite them in the pursuit of objectives worthy of their best efforts.[25]

3 Leadership includes substantive as well as instrumental rationality. Leadership is involved with management by meaning and by values as well as management by short-term objectives. Leaders help define what the work of the institution *means* — to members, to clients, to the larger sociopolitical community. Leaders articulate the vision, the mission, and the myth of the organization.

4 Leadership calls forth extraordinary talent and effort of the members of an organization. Leadership involves what Field has labeled 'managing by high expectations'.[26] Those leaders who expect greatness from their followers tend to find their prophecies fulfilled.

5 Leadership is essential for modern democratic institutions and societies. Without a broad base of people who think for themselves, engage in public debate about policies, and exercise responsibility for the quality of the life around them, institutions and societies lay themselves open to demagoguery and totalitarian rule. A healthy scoiety will be populated by people exercising leadership at every level and in a broad spectrum of institutions.

Clearly, the recent literature on leadership provides those who would educate for leadership rich substantive nourishment for their mentees. There remain questions, however, which the map makers of leadership do not address. Some of these questions are as follows.

1 Leadership is described as though the leader and followers inhabit the same, uniform meaning-world. It is a commonplace in the organizational literature to posit conflicts in role definitions between leaders and followers. Underneath the conflict, however, there is an assumption that people agree about what things mean; they may simply disagree that that meaning applies to them in these circumstances. In a world in which meaning is something always to be negotiated, however, can one assume that leaders and subordinates agree on what things mean? In a multicultural and multiclass society there is some evidence that those assumptions do not hold. Feminists also question the very terminology chosen to describe managerial relationships.
2 Many writers on the topic assume a uniformity of social and economic analyses of institutional life that call for leadership. There may be examples of mismanagement — poor planning, poor marketing strategies, inadequate personnel evaluation systems — but those are correctable without overhauling the whole institutional structure and culture. There seems an assumption of legitimacy of present institutions. Are map makers in the leadership field deaf to other perspectives which question those assumptions? Throughout the social sciences and in contemporary philosophical and cultural circles, one encounters references to 'critical theory'. Influenced by critical perspectives, many scholars have begun to question the most basic assumptions of rationality, individualism, objective science, the market system — in other words, the assumptions behind classical liberalism. Do these critical questions have no relevance for leadership?[27]
3 There appears a complacency with the intelligibility of institutional and organizational life. The analysis seems

to stop relatively close to the surface: communication patterns, power relationships, span of control, economies of scale, routinization of roles, corporate culture. How is it that people in social groups learn how to behave when they encounter new situations? What accounts for the remarkable stability of massive numbers of people behaving predictably every day when they come to work? On the other hand, how do changes creep in when conformity to institutional procedures is so tightly controlled, not only by formal rules and sanctions, but perhaps more so by informal scapegoating and criticism? Are there deeper structures and processes at work that might explain how institutions hold together, that explain how language itself exercises control through tacit expectations in interpersonal communications? Has the literature of leadership been isolated from other disciplines which illuminate these questions?

4 Apart from a few scholars such as Burns and Vaill, the literature on leadership appears to seal itself off from history. It is as though, in its quest for scientific purity, the theory and research on leadership had to identify aspects or systems of leadership which would be trans-historical and trans-cultural. Bass himself notes the relative isolation, until recently, of leadership scholars in the United States from their European counterparts, an isolation which tended to seal them off from methodological and cultural perspectives quite different from their own. Similarly, the field has only recently opened itself to multicultural and feminist perspectives. More profoundly, however, one must ask whether the field has taken into account the massive shift in sensibilities toward the modern world view. That is to say, in literature, art, and philosophy there has emerged a variety of critiques of the modern world by what has loosely come to be acknowledged as a postmodern world view. In the subject index to the 7,500 references to leadership studies in *Bass and Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership*, there is not one reference to postmodern

perspectives. Can a field of studies of such importance to the future of nations and institutions ignore the realities of the postmodern world?

5 Finally, at least for now, I kept asking myself whether leadership had to be a prisoner of such a limited number of conceptual and metaphorical frameworks. Would leadership take on fresher tones and meanings with different frameworks? Why must leadership be confined to the present language employed in the literature? This question led me to explore the works of other scholars whose metaphors about human life throw fresh light on the dynamics of leadership.

The following chapters represent excursions in search of some answers to these questions. After each excursion I have tried to draw out implications for the study and the teaching and the practice of leadership. Those speculations, however, are but a first attempt to digest the rich material I encountered. The excursions began to satisfy some of my questions, and to tell me what I needed to add to my work with leaders or with those aspiring to be leaders.

Gradually I began to form a more unified metaphorical framework out of which I could describe a new understanding of leadership — especially to an audience of practitioners, people trying to understand what being a leader might demand of them in their particular institutional settings and careers. It is the framework of drama. Being a leader today involves one in a drama whose outcomes are largely unknown. Leaders have to improvise on available plots and scripts and, in many cases, rewrite the script as the drama unfolds. Leadership means being a playwright, a lead actor, a stage director, a drama critic and a director all in one. More of this, however, in a later chapter.

Because the excursions were fresh and invigorating for me, I have probably carried back an over-enthusiastic appraisal of what I found. Some of those whose maps I used may find my enthusiasm naive and my interpretations and applications questionable. My response can only be that I brought to my excursions my own questions. These questions tended to dictate how I interpreted their maps. To my colleagues in the field of

leadership, I would caution that these are reports of initial explorations. As such, they are invitations for others to carry the explorations further to more mature analyses of how the leadership field may be enriched by such additional maps of the human adventure.

Notes

1 Bass, B.M. (1990) *Bass and Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership*, New York, The Free Press, p. 3.
2 Quoted in Bass (1990) p. 2.
3 Bass (1990).
4 This theory may be found in chapter 8 of Sergiovanni, T. and Starratt, R. (1988) *Supervision: Human Perspectives*, 4th ed., New York, McGraw-Hill.
5 For a summary of the distinction between substantive and instrumental models of leadership, see Sergiovanni and Starratt (1988) chs 7 and 8.
6 Weber, M. (1963) *The Sociology of Religion*, translated by E. Fischoff, Boston, Beacon Press; Manneheim, K. (1940) *Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction*, London, Kegan Paul, Trunch and Trubner.
7 For a contemporary discussion of this distinction, see chapter 10 in Vaill, P. (1989) *Managing as a Performing Art*, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass.
8 Deal, T. and Kennedy, A. (1982) *Corporate Cultures*, Reading, MA, Addison-Wesley.
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20 Vaill (1989).
21 Vaill (1989) p. 20.
22 Vaill (1989) p. 224.
23 Burns, (1978) p. 450.
24 Vaill, (1989) pp. 60–62.
25 Gardner, J.W. (1965) 'The antileadership vaccine', *Annual Report of the Carnegie Corporation of New York*, New York, p. 12.
26 Field, R.H.G. (1989) 'The self-fulfilling prophecy leader: Achieving the Metharme Effect', *Journal of Management Studies*, **26**, pp. 151–75.
27 See the recent work of Maxcy, S.J. (1991) *Educational Leadership: A Critical Pragmatic Perspective*, New York, Bergin and Garvey.

Chapter 2

Excursions into the Sociology of Action

Leadership presupposes an institutional social setting in which people have a reasonable knowledge of what they are doing. They know the meaning of the words and actions of others, follow a predictable routine, and sustain a continuity from day to day in what they collectively do. In this excursion I want to get behind those assumptions and understand what is going on beneath the surface. Is there, beyond the surface regularities we perceive, a deeper structure to that activity? Can we move underneath or inside all that activity and understand what enables it to work so smoothly? Perhaps such an understanding can enrich our appreciation of the dynamics underneath leadership.

Within the fields of sociology and social psychology one may find a rich, if confusing, variety of schools of scholars who have attempted to understand these very questions. One of the more interesting debates in these fields swirls around the question of whether a focus on micro-social realities or macro-social realities is the place where one encounters the fundamental 'realities' of social life.[1] Ought one to start with questions of how and how much macro-scale institutions impinge on actions of individuals, or with questions of whether patterns of individual actions, manifest at aggregate levels, should be seen as expressing the system's dynamic? Put another way, the debate is over the distinction between responsible action and determined action, or, in between, over the degrees of freedom within which power in organizations can be exercised.[2]

The work of Shutz and Mead in phenomenological sociology and of Garfinkel in ethnomethodology focus on the micro-dynamics of human social interaction, for it is there, they contend, that issues of freedom and determinism, of power and constraint are to be understood.[3] Anthony Giddens attempts to answer the question with a new paradigm of social action, what he calls 'Structuration'.[4] It would appear, in any event, that current interests in sociology are moving away from what was considered the mainstream sociological paradigm, that of structural-functionalism, associated with Talcott Parsons, toward a greater attention to the micro-analysis of action.[5] Parsons' structural-functionalism has been the major influence on previous studies of leadership from the vantage point of organization theory. Hence this exploration into more recent developments in sociology and social psychology may provide different insights into the phenomena of leadership.

The more recent micro-analyses of action pose questions such as the following: How does one person make sense out of what the other person is doing, so that he or she knows how to respond? What are the internal dynamics by which a person directs his or her actions and words? How do we account for the continuity of human social action within a bracketed time and space frame; that is, how, given certain circumstances and contextual cues, do people carry the action forward with a sense that there is an underlying unity to all the components of the action? How to explain the continuities of social action across time and space, such that similar actions tend to be reproduced in response to similar contexts? How does an outside observer make sense of what is transpiring between two or more human actors? What is the influence of knowledge on human social action, and is that knowledge primarily conscious or primarily tacit? What is the influence of moral norms or values on human social action, and are those norms primarily conscious or primarily tacit? What constitutes a group as a social entity? What is the difference between a social group and a social institution, between a social group and a society? What does 'social structure' mean and how does 'structure' influence or determine action?

The Tacit Structure of Everyday Life

Garfinkel in his analysis of human social action has illuminated an underside to action. Human social action has a dynamic, but tacit, component that usually goes unnoticed in everyday social life.[6] In a series of experiments, he and his colleagues interrupted the expected flow of action between and among social actors with nonsensical or totally novel interventions. These interruptions breached the social conventions, knowledge of which was tacitly guiding the exchange. As a result, the actors either reinterpreted the novel response as somehow actually fitting the convention, or demanded an explanation of why the person was not playing, apparently, according to the mutually accepted rules of the game.

Examples of such nonsensical or arbitrary responses include the following. In one experiment, students bringing a problem to their counselors found the counselors' responses initially puzzling. Unknown to the students, the counselors were giving responses from a prepared list, with the choice of each response determined by a table of random numbers, rather than by the problem the student brought to the session. The students, believing that the counselors were really trying to do their job, namely, to give them good advice, interpreted what the counselors had said as indeed making sense (somewhat the way we make sense out of the opaque statements contained in Chinese fortune cookies). In another experiment the experimenter insisted that people they were talking with clarify the common-sense remarks they had just made. If someone were telling a story about fixing a flat tire on his car the previous day, the experimenter would ask 'What do you mean, you had a flat tire?' The question would usually cause confusion, or consternation, leading to a response like, 'A flat tire is what I mean! What a crazy question!' In yet another experiment, they again broke the expected pattern of conversation. In response to the other person saying good-bye at the conclusion of a conversation, the experimenter would say, 'hello', leaving the person dumbfounded.

What Garfinkel's experiments were uncovering is the presence of a level of reciprocal trust in the intelligibility of

common-sense categories and constructs, and of trust that other people will follow the common-sense rules of thumb for communicating. These rules and constructs do not exist in some *a priori* grammar and dictionary, but are embedded in the action itself. In other words, in the process of social interaction, people speak and act as they perceive the circumstances warrant such speech and action; yet, the speech and action likewise generate the context, as those involved in that context are perceived to agree that that definition of the context is indeed correct. Hence, contexts both validate and originate the action; action responds to and reproduces the context; the context is the medium *and* the product of action as the action between social actors flows over time.[7]

The Interpenetration of Intelligibility and Morality

This analysis points also to the common-sense intelligibility that social action possesses. As the action between social actors proceeds, each person makes sense of the interaction as well as the dynamic context which is in the process of being both influenced and produced by the action. When things proceed as expected and are perceived as proceeding sensibly, then the action continues to flow. Everybody knows, though usually in a tacit manner, what is going on.

Embedded in this intelligibility, though distinguishable from it, is the normative quality of the action. The intelligibility of the action/interaction is also, though tacitly, expected to flow this way. That is the way it is *supposed* to flow. If someone interferes with the flow of action by introducing unintelligible actions and responses, it generates a sense of *violation*: 'Hey, you're not supposed to do that'. 'That's not right.' 'You've no authority to do that.' Or it generates a request for justification for stepping outside the convention, the tacitly agreed upon parameters and rules of the exchange: 'What did you do that for?' 'What's going on?' 'What kind of a game are you playing?'

Hence the interpenetration of intelligibility and the normative quality of action in context becomes clearer. The tacit

normative qualities of actions establish and maintain the intelligibility of actions and the intelligibility of actions grounds their normative quality.

Additional examples may help to clarify this rather abstract analysis. When people are playing cards, not only are their choices for playing a certain card expected to make sense within the available strategies and rules of the game, their facial expressions and utterances must conform to acceptable conventions. Moreover, any bystanders observing the game are similarly expected to observe the proper decorum and reverential silence. Were one of them to offer a piece of advice to one of the players while the game is being played, it would be seen as a breach of one of the most basic, but unstated rules of behavior in that particular context. Yet, in different context, at a basketball game, a spectator is much freer to voice opinions about how players should be performing, although even there, unstated boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable opinions are known by the fans to exist. In the example of the card players, one can see how their intense concentration defines the context. Their action reproduces the context; the context does not exist except as reflected in their actions. Were the game, on the other hand, among long-standing contestants in penny-ante poker, where humorous insults were not only allowed but expected, the context would be different, again reflected in their actions.

People lining up at a bus stop create a small social group. Their action contains both an intelligibility and a normative quality. Without any spoken agreements, their actions communicate a consensus in the group to act a certain way. If someone walks up to the head of the line as the bus approaches, that person will discover the latent normative quality of that group action.

A teacher in a school is notified one day that on the following day a supervisor will visit her classes. In the ensuing class observation and follow-up discussion, there is an assumed intelligibility and normative quality to their action. The teacher welcomes the supervisor into her class and submits to the supervisor's judgmental comments after class. The supervisor records positive and negative observations during the class and subsequently calls these to the teacher's attention. They both

reproduce the context of supervision as it is normally carried on in schools. The context calls forth the action of both teacher and supervisor; the action constructs the context. What happens between the two is intelligible within the context; their actions likewise reproduce the intelligibility of the context. The interaction exhibits the tacit normative quality of the context as well; the context guarantees the legitimacy of the actions both engage in. As the back-and-forth action between them flows during the time it takes for the class visit and subsequent discussion of the class, each micro-segment of that action is carried out by each individual within a self-correcting reflection on the intelligibility and normative expectations of the action itself. That self-correcting reflection is done in such a taken-for-granted fashion that neither actor is aware of how they are actually constructing the action, aware that what they are doing is a human construct, a social fiction, a symbolic event. On the contrary, what happens between them has the feeling of something natural, even if unpleasant for one of the parties. Of course, the exchange between the two is part of a larger pattern of group social action, which is presumed to have a larger sense of intelligibility and legitimacy grounded in its identity as a social institution called a school.

Garfinkel's work has illuminated a very basic level of human social action, namely that humans somehow know what they are doing and know it in common with one another. He was not concerned to place social action in a larger social system which could then be used as an interpretive tool to make sense of the activity of people. Yet the task of understanding the larger patterning of collective social action remains. If structural-functionalism is to be rejected because it stressed the primacy of the whole over the parts (the agents) how does one account for the structural properties and systemic qualities of collective social life? Anthony Giddens has attempted such an account in his 'Structuration Theory'.[8]

Structuration Theory

Giddens' theory attempts to avoid the dualisms contained in much of social theory, dualisms such as the individual and

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society, structure and agency, subject and object, autonomy and constraint. He builds on the work of Shutz and Garfinkel, affirming that human agents continually interact with their environment in an ongoing stream of experience and action, using a common stock of meanings and typifications to interpret what is happening. They reflexively monitor their experience and alter its direction when the situation, interpreted in their practical consciousness, seems to warrant it. Similarly, Giddens asserts the interdependent and dynamic relationship between agent and context. The agent makes sense out of his context, and that making sense of it generates action. The action, however, reproduces the context, or, as Giddens would label it, the 'structure'. At the heart of this analysis is Giddens' notion of the 'duality of structure'. Instead of allowing a dualism of action and structure, Giddens posits a duality: action is shaped by structure but at the same time action produces or reproduces structure. The two are ontologically linked. There is no structure independent of actors who reproduce it. Similarly, there is no social action, free floating and independent of structure. Structure is both the medium and the product of action.

The Structuring Influence of Consciousness

Giddens posits three levels of consciousness. At the deepest level, the unconscious represents those aspects of psychic life that have been repressed or forgotten. We can truthfully say, 'I was not conscious of that'. The next level is called the practical consciousness. Through our practical consciousness we are continually making sense of the stream of experience and activity in our lives and are carrying the social action forward by means of our reflexive monitoring of the action, even though we do not normally attend to how we do this. Language is a good example of the storehouse of practical understandings and skills embedded in our practical consciousness. We do not attend to the grammatical rules of subject, verb, object while we are conversing with someone, and yet the conversation flows back and forth seemingly effortlessly. Likewise our practical consciousness is alert to facial expressions, tone of voice and inflection in order to

pick up nuances of meanings being communicated by the other. The practical consciousness knows when something is supposed to be a joke, or sarcastic or a declarative sentence. The third level of consciousness is the discursive consciousness whereby we are able to give reasons for what we do or say. Usually, we rationalize our conduct when asked by others for an explanation, or when our actions appear to depart from the routine and habitual modes of conduct. For the most part, however, we carry out the everyday routines without giving them much thought or explanation, even though tacitly we know what we are doing, and know that we know what we are doing.

A Focus on Action, Not on Subject

Giddens claims that the basic domain of the social sciences is not the experience of the individual actor, nor the existence of any social institution but 'social practices ordered across space and time'.[9] We should not think of social acts as isolated, frozen things which an isolated agent, seeking some conceptually clear end, chooses to perform. Rather, action is a continuous flow of activity, of experience. We attend to or monitor this experience, more or less. An act is identified after the fact, so to speak, by our attending to the duration of our lived-through experience, focusing on a particular moment of activity, and fixing it for our discursive consideration in artificial isolation from the stream of action in which it is embedded. Purposive action is not composed of an aggregate or series of separate intentions, reasons, and motives. Rather the agent carries on by a reflexive monitoring of the flow of action, and the response to the action by the environment, and then again of the actor's adjustment to that response, and so on.

If asked to provide a reason for one's action, a person can usually provide a 'theoretical understanding of the grounds of their activity'.[10] But that rationalization would not be the same as a discursive reflection on specific items of conduct tied to the environmental context and the dynamic interaction one was in the process of experiencing. For example, one could set off to go to the grocery store. That may entail walking three or four

blocks to the store, using any one of three different ways of walking those three blocks. If someone were to ask the person what he was doing, he would answer, 'I'm going to the store'. That would normally satisfy the questioner. He would not ask, 'Well, why are you walking on the north side instead of the south side of the street?' In response to the original question, 'What are you doing?' a neighborhood youth would not have responded, 'I just said hello to my friend, and I stopped to kick a plastic bottle, and I ran across the street to get ahead of the traffic light, and I stopped to look in the new toy store, and I went across on Delancy Street to avoid the old drunk who sits on the stoop on Jamieson Street, and I stomped my foot at the old tom-cat, and waved to Joey at the shoe shine stand. . . .' If the questioner were to ask the youngster why he did all these specific things, the youngster might have a more difficult time explaining himself, since these were routine things he did whenever he went to the store. They were in response to the 'structure' of the geography of the neighborhood.

Structure as Enabler and Constrainer

Among many sociologists, structure is thought of primarily as a constraint. Structures are described as compelling individuals to act in certain ways. Giddens distinguishes between the force of constraint of physical limitations of the body or of nature, and the legal constraints of legal structures, and other forms of social structures such as kinship structures. Again, he cautions against reifying structures as having a force independent of social actors. He goes on to insist that structures are enablers as well as constrainers. Every situation we face imposes constraints of some kind or other on our action; yet every situation offers opportunities for action as well. Thus, human agents face the paradox of exercising creativity in situations through the potentials within the very constraints to possible actions.

Closely connected to his treatment of structure as both enabling and constraining is Giddens' notion of power. Power is simply the ability to make a difference in a social situation. Power is the ability to act otherwise than what the context

might suggest, but it also is the ability to reproduce the context. In most instances, power is exercised by the agent reproducing the structure. Power is the ability to leave one's mark, however small, on the social setting. Whether one acts in opposition or in conformity to routines, that action is an exercise of power. As in the above discussion, structure constrains power, but it also enables its exercise.

The Routinization of Social Behavior

Giddens grounds the recursive nature of social action in a view of individual development somewhat derived from Erickson's life cycle theory.[11] Giddens substitutes the term 'ontological security' for Erickson's notion of basic trust, and places a strong emphasis on those processes by which adults, not simply infants, maintain their ontological security.[12] The early experience of the child with its mother involves routines of feeding, caressing, cleaning, and holding. When the mother is not present, however, the child has to negotiate the anxiety over whether she will return. The continuing repetition of the mother's return and the feeling of security in her presence enables the child to trust the mother, both while she is present and while she is absent. The routinization of her care and affection provides that sense of ontological security. As the child develops, the relationship with the mother gradually moves from an exclusive one-way dependence toward increased mutuality. The child learns how to please the mother, how to make her smile and to clap her hands approvingly. In these encounters, the child is developing a sense of autonomy, even though its sounds and movements may be quite repetitive and simple. To the mother's routines, the child responds with its routines, causing in turn a response from the mother. Even at that early stage the child is reflexively monitoring the flow of actions in the encounter, seeing what pleases and what displeases its mother.

Giddens further illuminates the routinization of social action by his analysis of memory and recall.[13] Memory can only be understood in relationship to perception. Perception is a form of monitoring the flow of experience in the body in its context. But

since there is always far more going on in experience than can be attended to, perception tends to be selective. When listening to a colleague at a social gathering, we screen out the background noise of other voices to attend actively to the words of the colleague. Consciousness can be understood as sensory awareness of our experience within the stream of experience happening in that situation. Memory is simply the temporal consciousness of the flow of experience; it is the reflexive mechanism by which we recall a bracketed piece of experience.

Memory, comments Giddens, is the mastering of time.[14] Discursive and practical consciousness, then, are psychological mechanisms of recall. Discursive consciousness is a form of recall which the actor is able to express verbally; practical consciousness involves recall to which the actor has access while the action is going on, without being able to express what he or she thereby knows; the unconscious is a mode of recall to which the agent does not have access, even though the memory may be influencing action. Memory is a way of making an event present. We can use the remembered event as a clue or cue to what might be an appropriate response to our present circumstances.

When this analysis of memory is tied to routines of everyday life, we can see how the constant repetition and recognition of routines become embedded deeply in our practical consciousness. Routines are carried in our practical consciousness as memory traces. We feel secure in our ordinary day-to-day activities because the routines of language, gesture, and symbolic bodily movement communicate a sense both to ourselves and to others that we know what we are doing. Indeed, because we are reflexively monitoring our action in social encounters, we know that we know what we are doing, and that others know what we are doing.

Routines, therefore, are essential for the sense of continuity of the personality of the agent as well as for the institutions of society, which are such by their continued reproduction.[15] 'Structures' are the reproduction of routines of social interaction. They are both the medium and the outcome of social interaction. Social institutions are such through the continual reproduction of the institution in the actions of its members. In New York, the newspaper, *The Daily News*, ceased to be a social

institution when the workers went on strike. They refused to perform those actions which reproduced *The Daily News* as a social institution. After the strike, *The Daily News* became a social institution again. In 1990 many communist governments in Eastern Europe fell because the people refused to reproduce the everyday conditions which made them possible.

The Fragmentation of Social Integration

As Giddens moves from an analysis of social action in small groups to consider larger societies, he cautions against the easy acceptance of the term 'society'. A society is made up of several social systems, some of them internal, some of them cutting across several societies. He distinguishes modern capitalist societies from tribal societies. In tribal societies, which are by far the longest enduring societies in human history, social integration is closely linked to other forms of social systems such as governance, commerce, religion and labor. Most of the daily activities are carried on in the presence of significant other persons, often blood relatives. Kinship and tradition dominate the routines of everyday life. One acts as a family man, a relative, a food provider, a member of the tribe, a chief or a subject within social routines tightly knit together.

In modern capitalist societies, on the other hand, the social integration of the person in family and kinship relations is separated from other systems affecting one's life, such as political, economic and legal systems, religious affiliation, working occupations, and memberships in civic associations. These systems, though separate, intersect one another in various circumstances of one's life, such as the legal constraints to pay taxes on one's home, or the medical, legal and civic complexities of allowing a child with AIDS to attend school. The nation-state is one example of a modern capitalist society, although Giddens warns against thinking of modern societies only as nation states.

Another feature of modern capitalist societies is the separation of commercial and industrial systems from the governing system. In older, tribal societies they tend to be coextensive. Giddens observes, however, that capitalist societies would not

have been possible without the administrative power of the nation state to regulate social life in such a way as to promote the activities of the economic system.

Reflexive Monitoring of Social Systems

Another feature in the reproduction of modern societies is the increased reflexivity of the agents who reproduce them. In other words, greater attention is given to the monitoring of the structuring activity itself in the maintaining and transformation of social institutions. This, of course, has led to an increase in the science of management.

Although Giddens strongly opposes reifying structures, such that they might appear to be objectively out there, he allows us to *think* about structures as having a *quasi*-reality of their own. Hence, those who 'manage' social systems can think of the collective routines of action as having structural dimensions. Similarly, those who study the management of social systems — the monitoring of those who are doing the systemic monitoring — use conceptual abstractions to think about structural properties of social systems. As a sociologist, therefore, it is possible to think about social systems as having three structural dimensions: signification, domination and legitimation. What Giddens means by this is that actors in social systems, especially the managers, use these structural properties to reproduce, to control, or to transform the situation in which they find themselves. While the referents of these three dimensions may constitute realities in their own right (a language, administrative resources, material resources such as property or money, legal institutions such as laws and police forces), they are experienced as structuring a context, while at the same time they enter into the action of reproducing the context. Perhaps an example will assist us here.

Let us imagine a doctor treating a patient in a hospital. The context is structured by the language employed (technical medical language; deferential responses by the patient); by the setting (a hospital room in the contagious disease ward; the patient in bed, in a hospital gown, surrounded by antiseptic, functional

furniture); by the material and administrative resources available (the doctor is presumed able to call for certain drugs, to prescribe a certain diet from the kitchen, to call upon the services of other specialists such as neurologists); and by certain legal procedures and sanctions (the doctor is licensed by the state to practice medicine; the patient can sue the doctor for malpractice). As Giddens would have it, these structural dimensions are both medium and outcome of the action of the people involved; they shape the encounter and they are realized in the actions of the two actors who reflexively monitor their activity and engage in the routines which both define and produce the action.

Staying with the example, one can see that this encounter is an instantiation of the social system of the hospital as an institution. Doctors, nurses, patients and other staff continually reproduce the hospital as a social system by their activity, which is simultaneously contextualized (structured) by the hospital as a social system. One can also see in this example the separation of the patient's family social system from the system of health services, which in turn is separated from the occupational context, and the political context. Viewing the hospital as a social system, however, we can see how it intersects with other systems in the treatment of this patient. The medical insurance system is involved; perhaps the workman's compensation system is involved; the religious system is involved as the clergy are called in to visit the patient; even the family and kinship social system is involved in visiting, and sending get-well cards to the patient. In tribal societies, on the other hand, the witch-doctor represents religious, ancestral, natural healing, legal and kinship systems all tied up in one person. In the case of the hospital, these various systems do not simply intersect as light rays pierce a shadow. The details of their intersection directly affect how the hospital runs. The hospital makes provision for those intersections, usually by assigning staff and offices to co-ordinate such functions.

The intersection of systems does not stop there, for the hospital is one system among many other social systems in the community at large. The hospital intersects with the waste disposal system; the forensic evidence subsystem of the legal system; the political system through which local and state

funding is secured; citizen volunteer systems; the banking system; various unions representing different workers; communication and media systems. In all of the intersections with those various systems, similar structural dimensions continually contextualize the actions of the people involved, namely the modes of discourse and symbolic expression, the access to administrative and material resources, and the regulations and sanctions governing the actions of the members.

Implications for New Perspectives on Leadership

The above summary of elements in Giddens' theory is necessarily brief and probably seems inadequate for readers familiar with his work. For our purposes, however, the summary can serve as a building block for an analysis of leadership. Giddens' analysis of social action and social institutions raises some points worthy of reflection by scholars of leadership.

The study of leadership tends to highlight change in social institutions, movements generated by the influence of leaders in organizations and societies. Giddens' analysis, however, tends to highlight routine in everyday life. People tend to reproduce the institutional context in which they find themselves. Granted that there will be some very slow, incremental modifications in the way institutions function due to the accretion of minor modifications introduced by individual actors in the institution, nevertheless, the reproduction of the institution rather than the transformation of the institution tends to be the dominant pattern of everyday social life.

This sense is reinforced by Giddens' analysis of ontological security. The need for ontological security does not diminish as one leaves childhood. It tends to be guaranteed in the routines of everyday adult life, even in routines of very subtle complexity. Garfinkel's experiments tend to confirm how strongly the alteration of routines is resisted, because their disruption threatens the ontological security of everyone in the social system. If we do not know what to do, and furthermore, other people know that we do not know what to do, then we feel separated from 'reality'. Our anxiety over losing our sense

of competency and autonomy triggers resistance to untried and uncertain routines and urges return to those familiar routines which have worked in the past. Besides the conviction that these routines make sense, there is the added confidence that the familiar routines are morally correct: that's the way people are *supposed* to act. Within these routines, I can trust other people, I can trust the world to be the way it is supposed to be.

The implication for leaders is that they must deal with people's ontological security as a basic prerequisite to securing their compliance with proposed changes. Furthermore, the proposed changes must appear to have some continuity with routines of the past. In addition, the proposed changes must have or appear to have the qualities of routines in themselves, rather than be seen as apparently open-ended activities which might lead anywhere, whose outcomes appear unpredictable, and which therefore appear to carry great risks for the loss of ontological security. In other words, people need to have a sense that they are in control of the consequences of their actions, that the world is not going to blow up in their faces tomorrow morning as a result of changes they adopt today.

The intersection of systems in modern societies also points to the constraint upon leaders' abilities to change their own social system. In New York City, neighborhood leaders may decide to rehabilitate abandoned buildings in order to provide homes for homeless families, to drive out the drug dealers who use the buildings to peddle their drugs, and to provide employment to people in the neighborhood. Those neighborhood leaders must confront a multitude of bureaucratic systems, none of which seems to be coordinated to work together. These systems include the environmental protection agency, the housing authority, construction trade unions, banks, local political parties, police and fire departments, the historical preservation commission, the office of urban planning, the commission on commercial development, the federal housing and urban development department, the New York State highway commission, the city sewer department, the local and state coalitions for the homeless — to mention but a random sample. Getting approval from each of these bureaucratic systems for such a project may take years, and in the end be sabatoged by disagreements and

contradictions between the guidelines that some agencies demand must be followed. Again, Giddens' structural elements remind us that variations in control over administrative and material resources and access to legal systems and sanctions play a fundamental part in contextualizing the activities that will take place.

In another example, a school system may decide to restructure its curriculum, its graduation requirements, and its grading system. Under the leadership of the school board, school administrators may have gained support from the parents, the teachers' union, even from the custodians' union. They nonetheless have to contend with the state department of education and all of their guidelines; with the federal laws covering institutional arrangements for special education, or for the insurance of off-campus projects; with university admission officers whose formulas for evaluating student applications cannot accommodate the new curriculum categories or grading systems; with textbook publishing companies whose textbooks were not designed to support the kind of learning activities that the school system has created.

This is not to say that institutional leadership cannot effect changes. Rather, it is to point to the many obstacles to change, whether they be psychological anxieties over ontological security or external obstacles deriving from networks of other social institutions whose intersections with the leader's institution constrain what is possible, at least initially. One institution rarely controls all three structural elements of social systems and societies, namely, control over the language and the symbolic order, over material and administrative resources, or over the legal systems which legitimate and sanction public activity. Other social systems which intersect with social system X often command cumulatively greater resources than social system X, and hence cannot be constrained to adjust their systems to the changes of system X.

Another element of Giddens' analysis concerns the enormous skill most actors adroitly exercise in carrying on their everyday lives as they move through a variety of different social contexts, each with their separate codes, cues, costumes, symbols, sanctions. That the majority of actors get through the day with such relative ease, highlights how well they have learned

their routines, how intelligently they can read the context of social encounters and of institutional settings, and how rapidly they can improvise in unfamiliar settings until they get their bearings and can reproduce the context. Giddens comments on how easily we recognize social incompetents in social situations, and label them as mentally retarded, or emotionally unstable. In our eyes, they do not know how to behave, or are incapable of behaving *normally*. Those people cannot be trusted to carry on the routine, to keep the rules — mostly tacit — of everyday social intercourse.

Giddens' analysis also says something very important, and mostly overlooked, about the morality implicit in everyday life. The vast majority of people in the vast majority of cases spend the vast majority of their time keeping the rules! In the simplest form of social interaction, we are reflexively monitoring our actions with other people to respect their need for ontological security. Giddens refers to this as tact. It is the everyday concern with face, providing excuses for people who have made a blunder, extending a gracious comment that brushes over a sarcastic remark. The evidence indicates that most people genuinely want to be trusted. They monitor their interactions to make sure that, most of the time, anyway, the other person understands what they are trying to say. Even when they are dealing with someone they do not believe, or whose opinions they disdain, they normally carry off the exchange pleasantly enough, without getting into a heated argument — unless, that is, their own ontological security or sense of being trusted is on the line. Without sentimentalizing it, we can simply acknowledge how, by and large, under most circumstances, people are, or try to be gracious toward one another. Built into the routines of everyday life is a fundamental morality, the tacit acceptance and following of rules to protect and respect the dignity of one another. A moment's reflection would indicate how monstrous a society it would be were the opposite to be true.

Giddens' treatment of power seems deceptively simple, but it has enormous implications for leadership. Giddens maintains that every human being has power, namely the ability in all circumstances to make some kind of an impact on a social situation. While in prison, Martin Luther King wrote a letter. His

'Letter from a Birmingham Jail' became one of the most powerful statements in the Civil Rights Movement in the United States. What some would interpret as a context of maximum constraint, imprisonment, became for Dr. King a context in which he could define a deeper meaning of freedom. Of course, that context was shaped by his access to a rhetorical language enhanced by Biblical references well known to his audience, and by his access to the media and to political resources outside the prison, resources that were greater than the resources those imprisoning him could command.

The point for leaders is that within every person is a power to say yes or no to the conditions they face, to proposals for change, to possibilities for institutional transformation. That power to say yes or no can be exercised in silent resistance, or enthusiastic action. It is also the power to say 'Maybe'. Many people do not know how powerful they are, both individually and collectively. In other cases, people know of the potential they have to act otherwise than how they are acting, but they are afraid to lose their ontological security — and perhaps their security on many other levels as well. The question may at least be asked whether leadership depends in large measure on the ontological security of the leader and the leader's ability to connect the ontological security of others to the proposals and directions the leader wants to reach. In asking the question, the immediate caution arises concerning an unwarranted and reckless manipulation of people. What if they attach their ontological security to a leader's cause, when that cause is neither actually or possibly concerned with their ontological security, but only the leader's fantasies of self-glorifying public attention? We will return to this question and its corresponding caution in later chapters. For now we have noted that the power of the leader may be grounded in the power of people who associate with the leader, and that this power flows out of and is energized, at least in part, by their ontological security, or by the desire to enhance their ontological security.

Giddens' analysis of the reflexive monitoring of the collective reproduction of social structures within large social systems or societies offers additional insight into leadership. In modern societies, the monitoring of the reproduction of social

institutions becomes more abstract and tends to acquire a life of its own. Leaders tend to be those whose reflexive monitoring of the reproduction of social institutions become both more intentional and more abstract. That is, leaders may be the ones, or the group which, through greater concentration on the monitoring of system reproduction, understand how things work, and are in a position to explore imaginatively how things might work better. This might tie Giddens' social theory in with the studies of Donald Schon on 'reflective practice'.[16]

In his studies of professionals, Schon found that they tend to diagnose problems by recalling, sometimes intuitively and tacitly, similar cases in the past and the solutions that worked in those instances. Professionals develop intuitions of what works over years of experience. Sometimes, they cannot say where a hunch came from; they simply have a sense that something will work in this circumstance. Schon's analysis sounds like Giddens' 'memory traces' in the practical intelligence of the actor by which he tacitly knows what to do in a given situation.

Since we are only exploring theoretical possibilities at this juncture, we may also speculate whether Giddens' and Schon's analysis of routines, reflexive monitoring of the reproduction of social structures, and intuitions based on experience might provide some grounds for proposing that leaders have a larger intuition of the whole institution as a unity, as well as how the parts of the institution work. They may therefore be able to imagine other abstractions of the institution working in different, more effective, or more satisfying ways. In other words the leader's reflexive grasp of institutional routines may facilitate those large intuitions which place the institution in a new Gestalt for the leader. What this line of thinking may lead to, in the literature on leadership, is the notion of 'vision'. As we have seen in the previous chapter, several scholars on leadership have been proposing in one way or another that one key to leadership is the leader's vision, and the possibility of that vision inspiring followers to new heights of performance.[17] Few of these scholars, however, have asked where the vision came from, or what psychological mechanisms contributed to its formulation. Perhaps by linking Giddens' and Schon's work, we may be pointing to at least a partial grounding of the leader's vision.

When Giddens developed his analysis of the separation, in modern capitalist societies, between the social integration of the family, home, and extended family and the social integration of the large and impersonal systems found in modern societies (systems of government, economic systems, occupational and civic and legal systems), he was pointing to a problem facing those who would exercise leadership within these systems. The separation of the familiar face-to-face relationships of tribe, clan, and family from the other systems created much of the sense of alienation people feel toward those systems. Workers often give only a minimum performance on the job because they perceive that the company cares little about them as persons. They have little dignity and respect within the company. They can be replaced without the least remorse by company officials to whom they represent only an item on the expense budget. Similarly, people feel alienated by the state bureaucracy which intrudes on their lives with demands for taxes, or for compliance with new environmental rules. This alienation toward large, impersonal, bureaucratic social institutions is a common feeling whether it involves hospitals, the internal revenue service, the courts, school systems, housing authorities, transit authorities, police authorities.

Through their reflexive monitoring of the context of the social interaction, people perceive the amount of ontological security at risk in given situations and act in accordance to maximize their sense of face and dignity. These large systems do not offer them the sense that they are important and cared for in the way familial and friendship relations do. The challenge to leaders is to create an institutional environment in which both the employees and the clients experience something approaching that sense of personal importance and dignity which are experienced in the home and neighborhood. It will not work if it is simply a human relations ploy; it must be connected to the spirit and meaning of the organization itself. This challenge will be explored more in the following chapters. Suffice it to remember at this point that one of the basic challenges facing modern society is the restoration of a basic sense of trust and ontological security in a world whose structures seem neither trustworthy nor caring.

Finally, one comes away from this analysis of social interaction and life in social institutions with a pervasive sense of the drama of everyday life. All of social life is being actively constructed. In a multiplicity of circumstances and social systems, individuals are reading cues and codes, interpreting symbolic expressions at several levels, and improvising responses which carry the action forward. Social institutions are reproduced every day. That takes a lot of energy, intelligence and focused activity.

Social life is dynamic; it is being reconstructed at every moment. If people do not participate in the drama, then what we know as society simply stops, or it thins out, or slows down to a mindless, monotonous, drab, zombie-like, meaningless, slow-motion trance. It would be like watching a film turned into slow motion and then slow-slow motion. When we turn the projector back to normal, we get a sense of the vibrancy and energetic activity that makes up everyday life.

In this drama, leadership plays an important part. Leadership involves the playing of the drama with greater intensity, with greater risk, with greater intelligence and imagination, with greater dedication to making the drama work. One of the distinguishing qualities of a leader is the leader's passionate commitment to making the drama work better, and better for everyone involved. Because the leader is living inside the drama more intentionally and with a more focused reflexive monitoring of the action, the leader is able to imagine greater possibilities for the drama, and to conjecture about ways to make that happen. We hope to see how the leader does this in succeeding chapters. For now, perhaps we have begun to construct the foundation for this richer and more complex understanding of leadership.

Notes

1 A good discussion of this debate can be found in Fielding, N.G. (Ed.) (1988) *Actions and Structure: Research Methods and Social Theory*, Beverly Hills, CA, Sage.

2 For an enlightening discussion of these questions, see Archer, M.S. (1982) 'Morphogenesis versus Structuration: On combining structure and action', *British Journal of Sociology*, **33** (4), pp. 455–83.

3 Shutz, A. (1967) *The Phenomenology of the Social World*, translated by G. Walsh and F. Lenert, Evanston, IL, Northwestern University Press; Mead, G.H. (1934) *Mind, Self and Society*, edited by E.W. Morris, Chicago, University of Chicago Press; Garfinkel, H. (1984) *Studies in Ethnomethodology*, Cambridge, Polity Press.

4 Giddens, A. (1984) *The Constitution of Society*, Berkeley, CA, University of California Press.

5 Parsons, T. (1968) *The Structure of Social Action*, 2 vols. New York, The Free Press.

6 Garfinkel, H. (1963) 'A conception of and experiments with "Trust" as a condition of stable and concerted actions', in O.J. Harvey (Ed.) *Motivation and Social Interaction*, New York, Ronald Press, pp. 187–238; Garfinkel, H. (1984).

7 See the excellent summary by Heritage, J. (1987) 'Ethnomethodology', in Giddens, A. and Turner, J. (Eds) *Social Theory Today*, Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press, pp. 225–72.

8 Giddens (1984).

9 Giddens (1984) p. 2.

10 Giddens (1984) p. 10.

11 Erickson, E.H. (1967) *Identity and the Life Cycle*, New York, International Universities Press.

12 Giddens (1984) pp. 50–64.

13 Giddens (1984) pp. 45–49.

14 Giddens (1984) p. 49.

15 Giddens (1984) p. 60.

16 Schon, D. (1983) *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think and Act*, New York, Basic Books.

17 Bennis, W. and Nanus, B. (1985) *Leaders*, New York, Harper & Row; Sergiovanni, T.J. and Starratt, R.J. (1992) *Supervision: Human Perspectives*, 5th ed., New York, McGraw Hill; Tichy, N.M. and Devanna, M.A. (1986) *The Transformational Leader*, New York, John Wiley & Sons.

Chapter 3

Leadership and Charisma

Structuration theory provides a helpful analytical framework for investigating deep structures of action affecting the exercise of leadership. Giddens' theory, however, appears to suffer from two shortcomings. On the one hand, the theory tends to enshrine incrementalism in social change. The duality of structure, as a universal principle of social life seems to preclude rapid, or revolutionary, or massive change. If action is always constrained by the structures of the circumstances to which action is a response, then gradual, evolutionary change seems the normal, if not the only possible process of social change. The past decade has witnessed political, technological, and economic changes at a speed and on a scale not considered possible. Revolutions and the creation of new and unforeseen institutions likewise gives evidence of occasions and periods when action tended to break the constraints of structures and circumstances and create new and unexpected social forms. How is it possible for action to create new structures, so different from existing structures, if the two are a duality, two forces which tend to reproduce one another? The theory does not seem to allow for one to dominate the other, to break free from the constraints of the other. Hence, the question might be asked whether leadership is basically ruled out of Giddens' theory of action, for leadership seems clearly to be an instance where agency dominates and transforms and in some cases creates the structure or social system.

A second shortcoming of the theory is the reverse of the first shortcoming. The theory does not speak of the possibility

that circumstances and existing structures could be so dominating as to suppress all creativity and initiative, leaving the actor's power so hemmed in as to make the reproduction of existing structures the only possibility. In the next chapter we will address that second shortcoming. For the moment we will turn to the possibility of action overcoming the constraints of structures in major creative and innovative ways, namely, in the action of leaders.

In the first chapter we saw that scholars of leadership are currently more open to considering leadership in its more charismatic and transformative forms. Elements of transformational and charismatic leadership were identified empirically, both through surveys and through in-depth interviews and case studies. These elements included the following:

- vision;
- a grasp of and commitment to the purpose, identity, or mission of the group or institution;
- an appealing and persuasive articulation of the vision and purpose of the institution;
- the routinization of the vision and mission in administrative and organizational structures, in offices and procedures of the institution:
- the use of imagery, language, stories, and symbols throughout the institution that were grounded in the charismatic leader's message.

It would appear that we need to complement Giddens' theory of action by studying action in its least constrained form, as it approaches pure autonomy and spontaneity. The example of charismatic leadership appears to exemplify this form of action. In pursuing the grounds of charismatic leadership, however, we must push beyond most of the treatments so far offered in the literature, although Burns, Gardner, Vaill, and Eisenstadt provide the anchor for much of what I will say in this chapter.[1] Recent treatments of charismatic leadership and transformational leadership have tended to focus on business leaders exclusively; this focus has led to a concentration on what is meaningful and valuable to business people, or at least to those

chosen for the studies — a concentration that would not apply to leaders in other fields. Furthermore, the treatments of routinization, of the process of institutionalization, tend to look more at political or administrative variables, rather than at the substance of the charismatic's message. In other words, I would like to dig deeper.

Any treatment of charismatic leadership needs to start with the man who originated the first prolonged, detailed study of charismatic leadership, Max Weber. Weber deals with this topic in many of his works and sometimes makes statements about charismatic leaders which appear too apodictic. Hence I have tended to rely on one of his most penetrating interpreters, S.N. Eisenstadt, a man who has read all of Weber's work in the original German and whose appreciation of the sweep of Weber's work enables him to place individual excerpts of Weber's work in proper perspective.[2]

Weber defines charisma as 'a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional qualities'.[3] The charismatic leader has a special relationship with his or her followers. They see this person as endowed with exceptional qualities far exceeding their own. Charismatic leaders seem to have a clear sense of themselves. They seem to understand the big picture, to see the relationships between the whole and its parts in ways the followers had not thought of. The charismatic leader often functions with a passion and intensity to achieve something great, noble, heroic, extraordinary. There is a courage, a willingness to risk, to risk all in order to achieve the necessary breakthrough in the present circumstances. The followers sense that courage, that assurance, that vision of greatness. It calls them to unite their energies and elevate their sights to engage in the struggle with the leader. Eisenstadt captures the essence of this charismatic fervor:

> The charismatic fervor is rooted in the attempt to come into contact with the very essence of being, to go to the very roots of existence, of cosmic, social and cultural order, to what is seen as sacred and fundamental.[4]

To modern sensibilities, weaned on a condescending secular attitude toward anything remotely religious, and socialized into a view of knowledge limited to positivistic, empirical science and functional rationality, charisma in the sense described above is too hot to handle. Giddens himself attributes the influence of charismatic leaders to regressive features of personality, resulting in the suppression of independent moral judgement.[5] Many commentators have relegated charisma to the curiosities of anthropology, parapsychology, and psychopathology. A frequent brush-off involves a joking comment about Charles Manson, or Jonestown, or Adolph Hitler; about authoritarian personalities and their complementary dependent personalities; about adults seeking for a father or mother figure; about utopian fantasy. To be sure, charisma has its potentially destructive, dark side; it can lead to excesses of derangement and deviance. Likewise, charisma sometimes produces naive utopians offering simplistic solutions to complex social problems. Then there is the problem of cynicism. Having been deceived once too often, people are on their guard against persuasive leaders, fearing they might be just another machiavellian actor who manipulates the emotions and aspirations of others for his own self-serving ends.

Charisma has its beneficial side, however. In all fields of human endeavor one can point to individuals who dared to break the mold, who offered dreams possible of fulfillment, who in the face of ridicule explored new dimensions to a problem, whose heroic example led others to follow in their footsteps. As Eisenstadt observes, charisma can also be 'the source of the fullest creative power and internal responsibility of the human personality'.[6] The search for the Holy Grail, the exploration of the outer limits, the attempt to move beyond the familiar is always risky business, and the possibilities for self-delusion are numerous. Nevertheless, the emergence of great religions, new types of legal systems, political transformations, new economic organization, and breakthroughs in artistic expression were made possible by charismatic personalities and charismatic groups.[7]

One can challenge the assumption that the charismatic leader always and *only* appeals to psychopathological tendencies in followers. One can argue, on the contrary, that there is a

natural and healthy desire in ordinary people to be connected to some intelligible order in the cosmos, a desire to be grounded in some fundamental meaning about the nature and purpose of human life, a basic need to conceive of one's identity as in some way heroic. While most people may feel unsure about the significance and meaningfulness of their lives, they can respond to a charismatic leader who helps to illuminate that significance and meaningfulness for them.

Edward Shils puts the case well.

> The charismatic quality of an individual as perceived by others or himself [sic], lies in what is thought to be his connection with (including possession by or embodiment of) some *very central* feature of man's existence and the cosmos in which he lives. The centrality, coupled with intensity, makes it extraordinary. The centrality is constituted by its formative power in initiating, creating, governing, transforming, maintaining, or destroying what is vital in man's life. . . .
>
> Scientific discovery, ethical promulgation, artistic creativity, political and organizational authority . . . and in fact all forms of genius in the original sense of the word as permeation by the 'spirit', are as much instances of the category of charismatic things as in religious prophecy. . . .
>
> Most human beings . . . do not attain that intensity of contact. But most of those who are unable to attain it themselves are, at least intermittently, responsive to its manifestations in the words, actions, and products of others who have done so. . . . through their interaction with and perception of those more 'closely connected' with the cosmically and socially central, their own weaker responsiveness is fortified and heightened.[8]

One might perceive in the words of Shils an echo of what Giddens calls the need for ontological security. The need to be able to trust one's environment, to believe that the meanings which make up the stuff of everyday communication are not delusions, appears similar to the need to be connected to these

centers of meaning and significance as a grounding of ontological security.

A vivid example of how the charismatic political leader grounds his appeal in these deep, central human values is provided in a commentary Jesse Jackson, the charismatic political orator, offered to a reporter.

> You always searching for where the people are. I come to a town, I be talking to the driver on the way in from the airport, talk with the maids at the hotel, the cooks, sometimes even their children. If you speaking from their concerns, you pretty much on track. 'Cause they live their lives on the ground, they have the depth. What's good for them is pretty much what's good for the whole world, you can usually count on that. They *are* the base, the bottom line. . . . And I like to capture that and turn it into the music that's really there, find those common, universal chords in it. Because, get right down to it, most people's lives are not about ideology, left wing, right wing, any of that — they hurt, hope, rejoice mostly about the same personal things. . . . Best fuel for your engine is the spirit fuel of folks struggling for those simple, decent, basic things in life. When you stay in touch with that music, that rhythm, you speak with authenticity.[9]

In a striking metaphor which captures the relationship between a charismatic leader and his followers, Jackson reflected on his personal communication with his audiences:

> Truth, like electricity, is all around us, but we have very few conduits for it. What you do is plug the people into your socket, they give you that electricity, and you give them the heat and light.[10]

Speaking again of that communion, he says,

> You got to get inside of people. That's where it all is. You can't get inside of them unless you open *yourself* to

be got inside *of*. Follow what I'm saying? The key to other people's hearts is finding the key to yours.[11]

Charisma and Institutions

Charisma is usually thought of as antithetical to institutions. Institutions tend to stand for order, routine, predictability, uniformity governed by rules and policies, and so forth. Charismatic persons are usually thought of as non-predictable, spontaneous, intuitive, guided by their own rules, resisting constriction within institutional procedures. Often charismatic persons are seen as threats to institutions, to legitimate authority, to the prescribed order. And indeed they are. On the other hand, a closer look reveals some interesting relationships between charisma and institution.

A charismatic leader initially attracts a small group of adherents. The group has gathered together around the leader for a purpose. They have an agenda — whether it be religious or political reform, the establishment of some work on behalf of others, or the creation of some artistic enterprise. Tasks must be assigned, some measure of responsibility and authority delegated, some plans laid for the progressive unfolding of the project. As the institution begins to grow there arises the question of identity: what is the charter or constitution of the organization? There is also the question of succession: who is to take over when the leader is gone? All of this supposes some kind of routinizing of the charismatic energy.

However, it is not simply a case of calling in an organizational planner. Rather the very organization which the charismatic group forms should be expressive of the charismatic mission and purpose of the organization. Furthermore, the procedures which the group agrees to for internal coordination of activities, as well as procedures for serving the target population, should likewise express the meanings and values sacred to the group. In this regard, I must disagree with Trice and Beyer, who seem to call for an administrator who is not charismatic to handle the administrative details — as though the administrative procedures were somehow neutral, value free, separated from

the charismatic vision of the founder.[12] The medium and the message, the product and the process should all be consistently expressive of that charismatic connection to the central meanings and values originally espoused. In one sense, the central criteria of successful leadership of the charismatic leader and the initial charismatic group is the establishment of an institution that does not contradict or contravene its core values in its organizational structures and procedures. In other words, the institution must embody and express the charisma in its routine, institutional life. Oddly enough, the institution in its structures becomes the carrier of the founding charisma. Hence we finally come back to Giddens, but from a fresh perspective: charismatic action begets structure. One may legitimately speak of the charismatic center of an institution.

One can also understand institutional change as at least partly due to internal conflicts around the charismatic center of the institution. Even in the first generation of successors to the charismatic group, one might find varying interpretations of the charismatic center, or variations in developing applications of the charismatic meanings within the institution. Moreover, gradual changes in the external environment may require a reinterpretation of the charisma several generations later. Such reinterpretation helps to maintain a semblance of institutional identity while the institution may be undergoing adaptive modifications. Sometimes rivalries within institutions emerge, with differing interpretations of the charisma used to mobilize followers in support of one position against another.

External competitors with different charismatic centers may require internal shifts to accommodate the legitimate perspectives of the competition. Probably the greatest change in organizations occurs slowly over time as the routinization of everyday life thins out the charismatic elements, replacing the substantive meanings and values with more instrumental meanings and values. Efficiency replaces effectiveness; specializations so fragment the sense of the whole that it evaporates; hierarchical authority seeks its own justification by the authority of position, forgetting or minimizing the authority of corporate mission in whose service all institutional forms of authority are to be exercised.

Given the diversity of institutions in modern society, it would be natural to expect that the charismatic centers within those institutions might reflect considerable diversity. That diversity would stem from both the organizational needs and problems peculiar to that institution (a bank versus an elementary school, a prison versus a symphonic orchestra), as well as the symbolic orders embraced within each institution (the meaning of economic activity versus the meaning of artistic activity, the values embedded in health care versus the values embedded in architecture). Hence, one would tend to find charismatic leadership expressing itself differently within each type of institution.

The underlying task of leadership would appear to be similar, however: to relate the institution's purposes to a symbolic order of meaning and values, and to relate those values and meanings to the institutional organization of resources and coordination of activities. In this way, the leader deepens the members' reflexive monitoring of everyday activities with a new appreciation of the meanings and values those activities embody. As that appreciation grows, the members of the institution experience a greater sense of fulfillment, a sense of being connected to a larger universe of significance — in other words, they participate in the institution's charismatic center.

On the other hand, in modern industrialized societies various forces have been competing with the charismatic centers of institutional life. Driven by science and technology, modern societies began to manifest two differing types of rationality, what Mannheim designated as 'functional rationality' and 'substantive rationality'.[13] As modern society became more complex and structurally differentiated it occasioned a form of rationality which attended to the formal organizational and technical aspects of institutions. Concerns for efficiency, predictability, maximization of productivity, organizational coordination and such, led to ways of thinking about social organizations as self-correcting, technical, problem solving systems.

Complex bureaucratic institutions reflect functional rationality. Institutional procedures tend to take on a life of their own unless they are related to the substantive rationality which stands behind their very inception. Substantive rationality, on the other hand, is embedded in the symbolic and mythic order which

expresses basic human meanings. Often those meanings are expressed in narrative, in stories about human struggles, initiatives, and adventures which depict aspects of the human spirit such as courage, loyalty, wisdom, honor, trust, a commitment to truth. Besides its narrative form, substantive rationality also appears in a more abstract and philosophical form. Conceptual abstractions and generalizations and their logical coherence in a system of generalizations attempt to define the most basic structures of reality in the material, human and social spheres. In both forms, substantive rationality attempts to plumb the basic meanings, the core realities of existence. Seen in that light, substantive rationality is very close to the charismatic grasp of meaning and values close to human existence. Substantive rationality attempts to express those intuitions in stories or in understandable explanations and arguments. As charisma becomes routinized through the process of institution building, it takes the form of substantive rationality. Stories about the founder and other charismatic personalities reflect basic meanings and values of the institution. Mission statements, basic purpose statements, case statements, mottos and emblems — all express in imagery and argument these same meanings and values.

Modern institutions and societies employ both instrumental and substantive rationality, but the contradiction between them, neither understood nor attended to, is a source of conflict, instability, and alienation. The creative potential in institutions derives from its charismatic center, expressed in substantive rationality. That creative potential encounters constriction and dilution in the organizational extension of functional rationality in increasingly large and complex bureaucracies.[14] Due to the complexity of modern society, some bureaucratization is inevitable, and hence we find restrictions on freedom, creativity, and autonomy of the participants in institutional life. Where functional rationality obliterates substantive rationality in preference for uniformity and predictability and efficiency, the institution begins to die.

Under the positivist banner of science, there is a tendency in modern societies to question the very sources of charisma itself. Science has, in the minds of moderns, demystified the world; it has dismantled supernatural explanations of how the universe

works. Under that secularizing influence, statements about ultimate meaning, about the nature of the human, about what is most valuable in life, tend to be dismissed as private concerns, not really provable by any scientific, objective process of knowing, and therefore left to the realm of feeling, desire, and subjective imagination.

Therefore, in institutions embracing scientific management and the mystique of science as the only form of objective knowledge, the institutional value and meaning center are more and more dominated by functional rationality. A new myth replaces the myth of the institution's founding, and it is expressed in language such as the following: the bottom line; maximization of productivity; five year plans; integrated systems models; computerization of all systems; management of internal conflict and dissent.

Furthermore, the relatively recent introduction of money as the primary and universal medium of exchange, has tended to relativize the ties that bind people's loyalties within and to institutions. In industrialized western countries, accumulating money allowed individuals to be free from obligations of kinship, where the extended family had been the source of wealth and tradition and human fulfillment. Similar freedoms from institutional ties soon followed.

Western executives, like professional athletes, feel no obligation of loyalty to stay with a company. They go where they can attract the best financial package. Industries, likewise, have little or no commitment to the communities in which they are located; their charities are often a form of advertising; when a cheaper labor market becomes available, they simply move, informing some of the employees that they can come along if they want to leave their extended families behind. When money becomes the primary concern of both the employer and the employed, then commitment to charismatic values and meanings which give the company a qualitative cultural identity tends to disappear.

When the charismatic center of the political order and its institutions similarly begins to lose its credibility, ordinary citizens tend to disengage from participation. When the state and its governing agencies appear either as faceless bureaucracies

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doing what the law requires for the minimum promotion of social order, or as a collection of scoundrels who use their office to line their pockets and help their wealthy friends, then citizen apathy, alienation, and disengagement increases.

Eisenstadt suggests that the diminishment or loss of the charismatic center throughout society at large and in institutions in particular may account for various types of youth revolt and for the transformation of the phenomena of leisure. Not sensing any real meaning to their work, nor any dignity to their civic life, more and more people retreat to the sphere of the private. There they seek fulfillment in face to face relationships, in the nuclear family, in religious communities; for some the private offers little more than trivial pursuits, an endless round of entertainment and travel and leisure time activities with no serious commitment to anything except comfort and the avoidance of commitment.

Recapitulation

We began this chapter by examining the possibility that in the duality of structure, agency might, specifically in the case of leadership, dominate structure. We saw that in the case of charismatic leadership, at least, that was possible, either by the leader transforming an existing institution, or by starting up a new one. We saw, furthermore, that the charisma of the leader is not necessarily grounded in psychopathology and deception; neither is the devotion of the followers necessarily grounded in deviant or unhealthy psychological motives. On the contrary, it was argued that it is normal and healthy for human beings to desire meaning and significance in their lives and in their work. Hence, when a charismatic leader offers ordinary humans a deeper understanding of their lives and their work, they tend to respond to the leader's vision. While there is obvious attachment to the person of the leader, the real power of the leader is the power of the meanings and values central to human life which connect the longings and identities of the followers to a central ground of significance. The leader offers to the members a reason to live and to struggle. In reality, the power is in the members, but they

never know they have it until the leader gives them something to mobilize their energies, something to believe in, something in which they might find fulfillment. So the concept of leadership implies that not only the leader, but the followers also have the ability to dominate the circumstances in which they find themselves, rather than simply reproducing them. Many of the examples cited by Weber refer to leaders of large and important transformations within human history. But there are countless other examples of leadership on a smaller scale where leaders and followers overcame (never fully, to be sure) the limitations of the structuring properties of the context in which they found themselves. Hence, we seem to have enlarged the scope of Giddens' structuration theory by pointing to instances where agency dominates or transforms structure, although we must admit that the context nonetheless conditioned the very transformations that took place.

The Personal World

The above analysis of charisma suggests not only that it is routinized in institutional life, but that its sources in those central meanings of human life can be appropriated, if less intensely and systematically, by ordinary people. If the influence of a leader over people is the leader's perceived connection to those meanings, then there has to be some appropriation by the followers. This suggests that the capacity for contact with charismatic sources is there in the majority of people, and that further suggests that we take a look at the personal world of 'ordinary people'.

Often the treatment of leadership contains the subtle message that followers are relatively passive individuals who can carry on the routines of life, but who are not capable of much originality, autonomy or creativity. Not only must this dualism of leader-follower be avoided, it must be shown to make the task of leadership impossible. If ordinary people did not have the capacity to go beyond routines, to risk something new, to face challenges efffectively, then leaders would not be able to accomplish anything significant. It is the whole group — leaders

and followers — who achieve the breakthroughs in institutional and social systems. Although initially inspired by the leader's vision, the followers appropriate that vision and generate the energy and initiative in themselves to achieve the high goals they collectively set.

Edmund Sullivan provides a thoughtful analysis of this kind of personal agency.[15] Like Giddens, he recognizes the constraints of the personal world as well as its potential. He sets up a model of the personal world as one lived between polarities and tensions. In his treatment of these polarities, he comes close to expressing what Giddens terms dualities, but he has developed more specific personal variables which enrich the concepts of agency and structure.

Polarities of the Personal World

Socialization	*Transformation*
Social Self (me)	Intentional Self (I)
Identity	Individuation
Order (reproduction)	Change (transformation)
Preconscious	Conscious
Past (History)	Future
Ideological Symbols	Utopian Symbols
Determinism	Freedom

(From: Sullivan (1990) Critical Psychology and Pedagogy, p. 61.)

Through socialization, individuals are led to engage in repeated routines which develop habitual ways of acting. In turn, the repetition and continuity over time enables the person to establish and actively appropriate a social identity, a 'me'. That social self has a relatively stable identity (as a male, Italian, middle class, Southerner, etc.). The routines of everyday life tend to lend predictability and continuity — hence order. The social contexts are reproduced in everyday life. Yet this is done in a preconscious way, since habit and routine tend to happen as 'second nature', without any conscious deliberation (similar to Giddens' practical consciousness, or the reflexive monitoring of experience). The 'habitus', as Sullivan calls this propensity to repeat familiar social routines, is the rehearsal of what has been

so as to keep it happening. It is the reproduction of the past in the present. This continuous reproduction of the present state of affairs is accompanied by ideological symbols which extol the worth of keeping things the way they are, even when such symbols distort and obscure the conditions of society. Similarly, the reproduction of the past in the present tends to convey the impression that social conditions will always be this way, that our past has formed us, and that even though new conditions may arise, we will be able to order them in predictable routines, according to our traditions.

The other set of polarities in personal life communicates a much greater sense of the individual acting out of a feeling of autonomy, as one with a project to accomplish, as one who is constructing culture, not simply as one being formed by culture. Individuation, as opposed to identity, refers to the individual's ability to leave a unique, unrepeatable signature on his or her actions. As opposed to the continuous reproduction of predictable order, individuals are able to change and transform the social conditions in which they find themselves, and to do this in conscious, intentional ways. Although humans can create their future, they also do this weighed down with a past that conditions what is possible. Because humans can create an image of the future, they know that the shortcomings of the present can be overcome. They tend to act, therefore, under the influence of utopian symbols, images of a better world than the present one. What has happened before need not happen again. Human beings, though constrained by the past and the present, have the power and the freedom to construct alternatives to the past and the present.

Sullivan stresses that the personal world is lived within the tensions of these polarities; what appears to be a kind of passivity in the socialization set of polarities is as a matter of fact actively appropriated by the person; similarly, the set of transformational polarities suffer the limitations and constraints of the person's social context. In other words, it is not as though the individual is simply pulled and tugged between powerful magnet forces on the left and the right; rather, the personal world is an active struggle to honor the realities of human life to be found in both sets of polarities.

The charismatic leader, however, will tend to be drawn to the utopian symbols, will tend to image a better social condition, will seek to transform the present order, will appeal to others through the authenticity and creativity of his or her unique self — the I. Nevertheless, the institutionalization of charisma will tend toward identity, order, preconscious expression of the charisma, and a rootedness in the charismatic moment in the past. In either case, it is perhaps clearer now, that leadership involves a dynamic sense of agency, a creation of something that responds to utopian ideals, even though limited to the possibilities of the present.

In the next chapter we will take up the other problem with Giddens' theory, the possibility that structure dominates and constricts agency to such an extent as to render it inoperative, or, at best, badly crippled. For the moment, it remains to draw out the implications for leadership of the above considerations.

Implications for Leadership

If it is true that charisma is not restricted to the three or four giants who come along every century or so, but that it is a much more all-pervasive reality, to be found in all kinds of people to a greater or lesser degree, as well as in most institutional centers, to a greater or lesser degree, then it may be not only legitimate but *necessary* for the theory and research on leadership to provide an expansive stage for the study of charismatic leadership. Some consideration of a leader's charismatic grasp of meanings and values central to human existence ought to belong in any study of leadership. That suggestion, however, is accompanied by the awful thought that it might lead to a new series of seminars or workshops by the purveyors of the quick fix. I can imagine getting one of their multicolored flyers in the mail: 'Announcing the latest skill for the Leader of Tomorrow! Come to the Bannana Split Resort Hotel for three intensive days on charisma. You too can learn how to convey the connection between your firm and the cosmic order of things! Through multimedia presentations, learn how to lead your workers to a new sense of self-fulfillment and heroism! Increase Commitment! Form New

Corporate Identities! Unveil the Sacred Center of your firm!' Unfortunately, there will be those who attempt to commodify even charisma.

Given the modern sensibility, is charismatic leadership possible? Are people legitimately wary of the deceptive rhetoric as simply another political or public relations ploy? How does a leader in the postmodern world get in touch with a source or center of meaning and value when any and all absolutes are suspect? On the other hand, if societies and institutions within them continue to operate exclusively on functional rationality, then the human prospect is indeed a dismal one. The wellsprings of creativity, autonomy, freedom, and responsibility will be capped, at least for a while. We have the example of Eastern Europe which presented a mixture of substantive and functional rationality in its revolt: cries for freedom and democracy mingled with conversations about television sets that worked, greater availability of diverse foods at the stores, and decent housing. It remains to be seen whether the substance of the revolt turns out to be a stand for the inviolability of human dignity, or a stand for McDonald's. It does not have to be either/or; rather one might hope for a both/and.

Studies of leaders who tend to operate primarily out of a substantive rationality should be contrasted with studies of leaders who operate primarily out of a functional rationality to learn more about their impact on the motivations and work identities of the members. One might also look for connections between leaders' charisma and their broad exposure to the sources of cultural creativity in their society. We might also look for charismatic burn out — either in the leader or in the members and see what that looks like.

Another implication for leadership seems to be that leaders not only need to articulate goals, and purposes and missions for their institutions. After they have done that, presumably following discussions with a broad constituency, they need to look to the institutional embodiment of the central meanings and values of the institution *within* the myriad sub-institutional forms, divisions, processes, and within the products and services the

institution provides to the public. They will more than likely find that some institutional procedures *impede* the substantive values of the institution. Hence the alignment of institutional means and ends around the core values and meanings will be called for.

Perhaps another way of saying the above is that charismatic leadership has to focus on the process of *institution building*. Sometimes that will mean a focus on transforming an existing institution by renewing its understanding of the central meanings and values of the institution, and then by embedding those understandings in new institutional procedures and policies. Often that will mean a fresh understanding of the present fit between the institution and the needs of the larger society.

Besides the qualities mentioned in the literature reviewed in the first chapter, it appears that the charismatic leader would exhibit *courage* in the face of powerful forces opposed to the meanings and values that make up the leader's vision, *passion* in the commitment to those meanings and values, and a kind of *pouring out* of one's life energies in the pursuit of the project of institution building. Obviously these qualities would be exhibited differently depending on the type of institution and on historical circumstances. We are talking now, however, about qualities that go beyond the impersonal-sounding qualities of prudential judgment, participatory decision making, enhancement of organizational culture, and so forth.

Leadership may be differentiated by the types of institutions in which one found the leaders. No one institutional form of leadership would become the norm for all the others. At present, the business leader is often cited as the norm for all other types of leadership. In the field of education, for example, the majority of books and articles on leadership give the impression that educational leaders should emulate the example of business leaders. Attempts at such emulation tend to ring false notes among teachers and students on the first day after the administrator has returned from his or her leadership-training seminar. Each institution has its own set of organizational problems

and challenges; each institution has some unique grounding in symbolic meaning and normative systems. Leadership should respond to and emerge out of the institutional challenges and problems particular to that type of institution. If one could make a generalization about leadership across all institutions, it would be that the leaders should try to make their institutions charismatic. But even then, institutional charisma would be expressed according to the organizational exigencies and symbolic universes in which they find themselves.

The call for attention to the charismatic message and mission will not issue in an easy return to substantive meanings and values. In the next few chapters we will see that uncertainty and criticism swirls around substantive meanings and values. The old certainties are suspect, if not altogether discredited. Many might agree that contemporary leadership needs a new vision, fueled by meanings central to human existence. Getting agreement on those meanings, however, will be far from easy, given the apparently flawed nature of contemporary social institutions and the discrediting of the assumptions behind modernity. Those concerns will occupy our attention in the next few excursions.

Notes

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2 See Eisenstadt's extensive introduction to his 1968 edition of Weber's work, *On Charisma and Institution Building*.

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4 Eisenstadt (1968) p. xix.

5 Giddens, A. (1985) *The Nation State and Violence*, Vol. II of *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism*, Berkeley, CA, University of California Press, p. 305.

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8 Shils, E.A. (1965) 'Charisma, order and status', *American Sociological Review*, **30**, pp. 199–213.
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Chapter 4

Leadership of Flawed Institutions

Leadership grounded in a profound grasp of meanings central to human fulfillment is able to infuse the work of institutions with those meanings, and thus to draw the allegiance of the other members of the organization toward those meanings and purposes. But what if the organization or institution one seeks to lead is badly flawed? What if the organization contains systems or structures which debilitate, coerce, and frustrate the activity of people inside and outside the organization? How is one to proceed if one occupies a position of leadership in such an organization?

While Giddens' structuration theory provides deeper insight into the balance between agency and structure, his analysis does not take up a critique of social systems and organizations in which structure so dominates agency as to severely restrict the agents' power to make a difference in the circumstances of their everyday lives. This chapter reports an excursion into critical theory, and exploration of the impact of some social structures on people's sense of agency. First I want to look at situations of structural domination based on class, on race and on gender. Then I will move on to study a broader critique of the intrusion of instrumental rationality into all forms of modern life. The chapter will conclude with an exploration of some implications for leadership.

Structures of Domination

Domination is a word people in professed democracies are uneasy with. The word suggests intentional cruelty and something

approaching enslavement. It smacks of overstatement or of a harsh Marxist broadside. As it is used in this chapter, domination refers to a continuum of unjust and depersonalizing relationships among individuals and among groups. On one end of the continuum we can find its more violent forms as in the Ku Klux Klan, or in neo-Nazi groups. At the other end one finds its more refined and subliminal forms as in gender stereotyping or in the distortion of world news packaged into a thirty-minute, advertising-driven network television production. One does not have to be a Marxist to be able to point out structures of domination. In the analysis of social relations, one can identify one group of people as having more power, prestige, or influence in social relations on a continuing basis. These relationships may be called relationships of domination, even though the fact of domination may be blurred by a rhetoric of concern for justice, fairness, affiliation, loyalty. The social conditions which enable those relationships of domination to perdure we may call structures of domination, whether they be laws, customs, institutional policies and arrangements, commercial practices, cultural symbols, or religious practices. Clearly the feudal relationship of the landed aristorcracy to the tenant farmer, even in the most benign circumstances, was a relationship of domination. So too, one may say that in the early years of the industrial revolution, owners and managers of factories dominated the factory worker. Most dictators dominate the citizenry through the presence and implied threat of their police forces. Men dominate women through cultural and economic control. Ethnic and racial groups dominate other racial and ethnic groups through cultural, legal, economic and political leverage.

It is not as though there is a conscious conspiracy of some mean-spirited people to make the lives of other people miserable. Rather, it is the subtle assumption among members of the dominant group of entitlement: entitlement to ownership of property; entitlement to be served by others; entitlement to enjoy the prerogatives of wealth and power; entitlement to the deference of other people. Along with this attitude of entitlement, one can sometimes find explicit, derogatory stereotypes of the dominated group:

'What would you expect of a peasant?'

'Most women are emotionally unstable.'

'Everyone knows that the workers need constant supervision or they will slack off.'

'The masses simply want bread and circuses.'

'It's common knowledge that Irish (blacks, Germans, Jews, Chinese . . .) are easily given over to drunkenness (laziness, promiscuity, superstition, thievery . . .).'

These stereotypes are often accompanied by stories which purport to provide proof for such sweeping generalizations. The stories are usually followed by jokes which highlight the dominated group's supposed failings and vices.

These often submerged attitudes of superiority lead to choices, repeated again and again in everyday life, to exclude the dominated group from participation in the perceived privileges of the superior group: membership in exclusive clubs, access to certain levels of employment, access to housing in certain neighborhoods, access to bank loans and other forms of financial credit, access to influential political groups. Furthermore, knowledge of how to gain access to and to maneuver within these privileged areas of society is often guarded from those considered to be inferior, as, for example, how one may obtain lines of credit with several banks with little or no collateral. As these actions and choices of the dominating group are repeated year after year and generation after generation, the social realities which these choices generate tend to become fixed, as though that state of social reality is the natural way 'things are supposed to be'. Hence, those in the dominating group have little or no awareness of the resentment their privileged position and their assumption of entitlement causes in the dominated group.

Husbands will complain to other men, 'I just don't know what she is so upset about. I bring home the pay check, and that's the thanks I get. So what if I had a few beers with the

fellows at the office and got home late for dinner. What's the big deal?' The sympathetic response will usually be something about the emotional instability of most women. An executive will be put off by a surly maintenance employee, with no understanding of how the enormous disparity in their salaries, living conditions and leisure time options grates on the maintenance worker.

These relationships of domination are expressed in structural properties of social action and in structural principles of social systems. Historically, one can point to laws against the formation of worker unions, and, subsequent to their formation, against strikes; laws against divorce, and customs regulating the possibilities of women working outside the home; laws regulating voter registration; entrenched practices of separate public school systems and segregated housing patterns. The depth of the commitment of the dominant groups to maintain these social arrangements is shown by the fact that new laws had to be passed in order to force the dominant groups to desist from their exclusionary practices. Again, it is not that most of the people in the dominant group were conspiring to make the lives of the people in the dominated group miserable; rather, it is that the social relationships which guaranteed them their privileges were taken for granted, as simply the way the world ran. Changing those relationships was like changing the order of reality itself.

Indeed, as Fielding points out, recent sociological scholarship has begun questioning the traditional understanding of social order, as though it naturally emerges from below in co-operative relationships at the local level, up to law-making institutions, and thence to the relations of the state with its citizens in an organic social system. Instead of order being a natural expression of the social, the social is coming to be seen by some as an expression of and vehicle for the agenda of control by those in power.[1] Hence, social structures would be understood as pervasive instruments of control, maintaining relationships of domination.

We can understand how deeply these relationships are embedded in the human psyche by examining the variables that make up the personal world which we briefly treated in the preceding chapter. Edmund Sullivan has contrasted the personal

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world of the dominant group with the personal world of the dominated group.[2]

In table 4.1, Sullivan indicates how the personal world of the dominant group is negatively mirrored in the personal world of the non-dominant group. Where in one world we find a sense of identity, a continuity with a tradition, a sense of being in control of one's world, of that world having stability and order, in the other world we find an ambivalent sense of identity, a sense of the arbitrariness of the social order, of not being able to control one's destiny, a sense of alienation from existing institutions.

Sullivan goes on to chart the personal world of a ghetto youth in the United States.[3] In his depiction of that world, we can see the potentially explosive elements, which, as a matter of course, errupt periodically in inner cities in the United States, much to the surprise and bewilderment of the dominant groups in the United States who have little or no contact with the world of the ghetto.

In another revealing contrast, Sullivan charts the different personal worlds of Male Dominance and Female Oppression.[4] It is important to note that these are large generalizations, stereotypes, if you will, that some men and some women may find offensive. The table is laid out in its starkest form, to make a point. Nevertheless, many women, at least, will recognize the general pattern.

As Giddens emphasizes, every person in any given social situation has the power to make a difference in the circumstances which condition action. The fact of relationships of dominance does not mean that the non-dominant person is helpless. Rather, the relationship of domination tends to diminish the fuller autonomy of the person, inhibiting a more complete expression of the agency of the person. Clearly, people living in ghettos have produced significant art and literature and sophisticated political initiatives; clearly there are examples of women throughout history who have risen to prominence in the male-dominated world. But there have been millions of poor people, women, peasants and workers who are defeated by the continual burden of trying to be a somebody when the larger social, political and cultural world around them communicated that they

Table 4.1 Hegemonic Stability (Formative Dynamics)

Cultural form of the dominant class		Cultural form of the nondominant class
Habitus		Habitus
(a) *Social self* — a solidarity is experienced with one's class. This solidarity is buffered by a clear sense of identity . . .	⟷	(a) *Social self* — although there is a 'solidarity present because of common fate', it is not buffered by a strong sense of identity . . .
(b) *Identity* — in which one sees a close set of ties with one's parents and peers, which is integrated into an order . . .	⟷	(b) *Identity* — is diffused because the cultural dynamics of class and because the inadequacy of social power mutes a strong identification with one's parents and peers (i.e., father wants son to be different from him).
(c) *Order* — which is backed up by the legitimacy engendered for this class in the family ties, educational system, and state apparatuses. The cumulative residual of this ideological order is preconscious . . .	⟷	(c) *Order* — the experience of the social order appears arbitrary, and this class form is not legitimated by family ties, the educational system, or the state apparatuses. The school system slots members of the class for less prestigious educational outcomes, and this is done in such a fashion to allow members to be preconscious . . .
(d) *Preconscious* — so as to appear natural and inevitable rather than appropriated or consolidated. This preconscious consolidation is organized in a clearly ideological . . .	⟷	(d) *Preconscious* — of the systematic nature of this legitimated exclusion, thus appearing natural or inevitable and probably the best thing for all involved (i.e., complicity in their own oppression).
(e) *Ideological* — manner which justifies this seeming inevitability as eternal and historical and possibly biologically generated. Thus a determinism . . .	⟷	(e) *Ideological* — systems operate in this class by the acceptance of their exclusion from power and prestige as external and ahistorical (we always have been this way — we will always be the way we are now).
(f) *Determinism* — is experienced as to the natural location of one's cultural form in the class structure. This is the experience of natural entitlement, which allows no challenge to the present cultural hegemony.	⟷	(f) *Determinism* — is experienced as to the natural location of one's cultural form in the class structure. This is the experience of natural disenfranchisement which presents little challenge to the present cultural hegemony.
↑		↑
INTEGRATED		ALIENATED

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Project		Project
(a) *Intentional self* — a sense of agency and congruence with the larger cultural project is prevalent. Children and adults in dominant social positions perceive themselves as originating their situation or fate. This allows for a sense of individuation.	⟷	(a) *Intentional self* — in the nondominant position is either low or severely lacking in a sense of agency. Children and adults in the nondominant position perceive themselves as pawns in an arbitrary system which is governed by the hegemony of the dominant class's intentions.
(b) *Individuation* — which is, in essence, the sense that there is a place in the world for me which I, through my agency, bring about and originate. Change	⟷	(b) *Individuation* — is lacking in any sustained sense. People in the nondominant social position do not experience that they can have a place in the world carved out by their intentions. They have a sense of being pawns in a larger social system.
(c) *Change* — in a dominant position is experienced as orderly and predictable. The powerful sense of agency stemming from a congruence with the larger cultural hegemony is experienced as possible but systematically in the hands of the agent.	⟷	(c) *Change* — in a nondominant social position is experienced as disorderly, arbitrary, and unpredictable. Since the larger social totalities that this class is embedded in do not respond to its intentions, change is considered luck rather than the predictable outcome of concerted actions governed by one's intentions.
(d) *Conscious* — actions are governed by the directives of the larger cultural project. Under monopoly capitalism, these conscious decisions are governed in a superordinate sense (but not solely) by the profit motive.	⟷	(d) *Conscious* — actions are not integrated into the larger cultural project. In the nondominant formative position, there is a failure in consciousness. Sartre would call this class a class 'in itself' but not 'for itself'.
(e) *Utopian* — images of change are always governed by reform rather than revolutionary visions. The utopian image in the dominant class is gradualistic and progressive and opposed to revolutionary and system-destabilizing freedom.	⟷	(e) *Utopian* — images are muted by the failure of this class to believe that consolidated social action can possibly yield to one's intentions. It is a condition of 'bad faith', in Sartre's terms.
(f) *Freedom* — is experienced as the sense of agency, which comes with accomplishing the tasks of the larger cultural projects. It is also the absence of impediments to the agents' sense of agency (i.e., liberal freedom).	⟷	(f) *Freedom* — if it is perceived at all, is experienced in the microcosm (i.e., family, peers) but absent in a sense of accomplishment within the larger cultural project. This absence of freedom is a condition of what Marx called 'alienation'.

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Table 4.2 Schematic Interpretation of Watts Youth before the Ghetto Riot — Formative Dynamics of Underclass Youth Entrapment before Riot

Habitus		Project
(a) *Social self* — in underclass entrapment, the social self accepts the negative identity of the dominant class. Where there is some positive self-conceptions, it is frequently coalesced around the ability to survive in conditions of dire and chronic poverty	⟷	(a) *Intentional self* — is totally occupied with the survival demands of the ghetto life. Although there is resistance and rebellion, it is not directed at the system and is not felt possible to be effective. There is a sense of being a pawn in the larger economic system, which defies attempts at agency.
(b) *Identity* — is achieved by the repetitive quality of survival conditions in chronic unemployment. The repetitive quality of these negative survival conditions engenders a sense of negative self-worth. Survival culture is reactive in origin but not a passive adaptation to encapsulation. Activity sustaining an identity can be extremely resistant, but completely in response to rejection and the destructive aspects of ghetto life	⟷	(b) *Individuation* — is stifled by being locked into a system that hampers movement. A certain cultural style is present, but it is an individuation that has been totally styled by a 'history of oppression and exploitation'. Within the ghetto a sense of individuation is achieved by proving you can 'take a piece out of the system'. Thus 'conspicuous consumption' becomes one expression of individuation in the ghetto. This consumption usually mimics the consumption patterns of the dominant culture.
(c) *Order* — is achieved by the legitimacy of welfare and state intervention under liberal capitalist hegemony. This minimum order in an otherwise chaotic life is achieved bureaucratically through the facilities of welfare programs, which are permanent when high employment is acceptable within the state. There is also a community of survival, which functions at a day-to-day level but at the mercy of police intervention. The presence of the police represents the organized violence of the state maintaining order in ghetto life.	⟷	(c) *Change* — in the ghetto is experienced negatively. In the lowest tier of the economic system, change is usually for the worse. You are more likely to be losing a job than finding one, going to prison rather than coming out, losing a friend through self-destruction rather than celebrating his or her good fortune. Change is therefore experienced as a 'downward spiral' whose cycle can only be broken by steady employment, 'which not only earns money, but also provides opportunities to invest in a future'; this has much to do with building one's sense of self-worth. Thus, 'I need a *job*, a job where it's at'.

(d) *Preconscious* — solidification of ghetto entrapment is engendered by a generational cycle of chronic unemployment. The situation of a crisis state and its survival measures become 'natural' and 'everyday' rather than temporary feelings of lack of security that most people feel.	⟷	(d) *Conscious* — actions leading to goal-directed projects are absent. The ethics of survival lead to a hand-to-mouth mentality, which curtails the projection of sustained and long-term problem solving. Glasgow notes that institutionalized racism — characterized as ghetto residence inner-city educational institutions, police arrests, and so on — does not produce lower motivation; it destroys motivation.
(e) *Ideological* — pursuits of the dominant class are accepted by ghetto youth. Being affected by the mass media, they accept the desirability of consumption and flaunt it when possible. Most of the time, however, they eventually accept that they will not get 'a piece of the pie'. This is ideologically backed up by the ghetto education, which usually ends in failure. Contrary to popular belief, ghetto youth aspire to graduate from high school; their educational aspirations are dampened as they proceed through a school system that perpetuates a sense of permanent underachievement.	⟷	(e) *Utopian* — the downward spiral of chronic unemployment is 'negatively utopian'. They no longer give a damn. They refuse to search or advertise that they are available. They have lost faith in the social order, in those who had promised some relief; they are skeptical of any change. One such brother clearly states 'I haven't been trying — if people come up with something or I hear, I'll go — if it's straight, OK, or I'll leave it alone'. Nevertheless the search for a job, for a way to make a living, for some money consumes almost all the energy of ghetto youth (Glasgow, 1980, p. 84). Project in these conditions is limited to survival maneuvers. A large societal project is totally entrapped under conditions of chronic unemployment.
(f) *Determinism* — is felt as the changelessness of chronic unemployment. After these young men leave the educational system, we have the picture of a group of youth who have no educational credentials and little vocational training in the skills necessary for the swiftly changing job market — a group of men totally at the whims of periodic employment.	⟷	(f) *Freedom* — a condition of bondage is pervasive. The power of the arbitrary nature of a hostile economic system totally limits the possibilities for options toward something different from the present (i.e., alternative futures). It is a condition of limited or 'small futures', in which the present exploitation of the economic system is buffered by the oppression produced by institutionalized racism. The dominant class legitimates the presence of the underclass as an unfortunate biological occurrence.

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Table 4.3

Male Dominace		Woman Oppression
Habitus		**Habitus**
(a) *Social self* — a solidarity between men across classes that to be a man is to be identified with a superior gender. Male dominance indicates that the part of one's overall personal identity which is gender-related is conceived of in positive terms.	⟷	(a) *Social self* — the social self is permeated with the sense of inferiority of the women's sex from the cultural surroundings. This is stabilized by the sense that this 'inferiority' is biologically based and invariant historically.
(b) *Identity* — male identity is integrated into the wider culture's valuing of the male sex. In extremely macho cultures, this can be seen in the sadness of the family when the first child born is a female.	⟷	(b) *Identity* — a positive sense of the self is not buttressed by the surrounding culture. Identity is achieved in a more derivative manner — females get to perform roles that are respected by male-dominance norms.
(c) *Order* — is achieved by the understanding that cultural structures which make female oppression unconscious (e.g., from the earliest socialization practices, both mothers and fathers treat females as being more dependent and vulnerable in relation to male children).	⟷	(c) *Order* — is achieved within the understanding that females will be dominated by males and thus be protected by the 'stronger sex'. This notion of the stronger sex concedes that male might makes right.
(d) *Preconscious* — male dominance is achieved by cultural structures that make female oppression unconscious (e.g., from the earliest socialization practices, both mothers and fathers treat females as being more dependent and vulnerable in relation to male children).	⟷	(d) *Preconscious* — a habitual status of dependency and vulnerability for female children allows for an unconscious appropriation of cultural dependency structures that are perceived to be biologically induced rather than culturally learned.
(e) *Ideological* — underpinnings of patriarchy are buttressed by biological metaphors which culturally sanction male dominance because of inherent biological differences where males are superior biologically.	⟷	(e) *Ideological* — underpinnings for female oppression are buttressed by biological metaphors that culturally sanction female inferiority because of inherent biological differences where females are inferior biologically.
(f) *Determinism* — male agency and project are believed to be inevitable and natural consequences of biological superiority.	⟷	(f) *Determinism* — female oppression by male dominant structures are seen as inevitable and natural because of biological inferiority.
↑		↑
INTEGRATED		ALIENATED

Project		Project
(a) *Intentional self* -- males perceive themselves to be the focal point of agency in a society under patriarchy. Males perceive that their intentions are preeminent over females because 'this is a man's world'.	⟷	(a) *Intentional self* — under conditions of oppression within patriarchial structures, women are either low or severely lacking in a sense of agency. They perceive their intentions where operating to be subordinate to their male counterparts.
(b) *Individuation* — is the sense that there is a place in the world for me which I, through my agency, bring about. Although class structures make a difference where males are concerned, patriarchy crosses these boundaries in distinct ways.	⟷	(b) *Individuation* — under patriarchy is muted and eclipsed because the nondominant social position of women makes it appear inevitable that a world carved out by their intentions is impossible to achieve in an order of male dominance.
(c) *Change* — the ability to reorder the world is understood to be relatively possible for male even where class domination is operating. So, even under conditions of class domination, lower-class males have a greater sense of agency than their female counterparts.	⟷	(c) *Change* — for women under patriarchy is sensed to be possible as a result of male agency. Thus, women under stabilized patriarchy see change as possible only as the result of male initiative.
(d) *Conscious* — actions are governed by directives of the larger patriarchial project of men over women. Men see themselves as more goal-oriented than women, exclusive of class structures and class dominance.	⟷	(d) *Conscious* — actions for women are habitually oriented to the projects of men under patriarchy. Supposedly behind every male initiation or project is a woman who supports his intentions without reciprocity.
(e) *Utopian* — images of change are imaged as being carried out by solidarity among men within a background of women's support. Male utopian images frequently emphasize control and power over participation and community.	⟷	(e) *Utopian* — images are muted and fragmented by the failure of women, under patriarchy, to believe that consolidated social actions could be launched by women as a cultural force. Frequently, this fragmentation of images is exacerbated by competition between women for men's favor.
(f) *Freedom* — is sensed under patriarchy to be the result of male initiative or agency. Even under conditions of class dominance, lower-class males have a greater sense of agency than their female counterparts.	⟷	(f) *Freedom* — for women under patriarchy is perceived as coming through the initiation of male agency. One could label this 'spurious freedom of alienation', since it is not tied to the direct agency of women.

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were, when all was said and done, insignificant. So they settled for small victories within the small circle of neighborhood and family: one known for her tasty recipes, one know for his skill at dominoes, one known for his clever jokes about the politicians and the police, one known as the toughest barroom brawler, one known for her ability to cuckold her husband.

The point of this discussion about relationships of dominance, however, is not to concentrate on the extremes, where the contrast makes the injustices between groups palpably evident, but more to point out the reality of domination in all its forms. One can think of domination as stretching across a large continuum of relationships, some of which are horrifying, and some of which are the stuff of situation comedies. In social life, there is a continual exercise in one-upmanship. In our everyday lives, we encounter people who try to impress us with their importance or superiority, or people whose manner communicates not even the effort to impress us, but simply the assumed fact of their superiority. Sometimes that derives from social class or racial attitudes, but many times it occurs between people of the same race or social class or occupational position. In our more candid moments, we may indeed find *ourselves* engaged in the same form of impression management, as those around us.

Social life will never be free from this type of individual jostling for position and recognition, for it appears to be in our nature to strive for autonomy, independence, and social acceptance as a 'somebody'. Often that means appearing to be better than someone else. On the other hand, when this process of self-assertion becomes translated into institutional practices, into systems within and among institutions, it quickly becomes unjust and dehumanizing, for it institutionalizes unfairness. When access to certain levels of management are denied to racial or ethnic groups; when there are salary differentials between men and women which have little relationship to the importance of the work being done; when disparities in medical benefits or job safety standards are grossly disproportional among corporate employees; when companies seek political protection from environmental safety requirements; when promotion standards are neither made public nor fairly exercised — in these and other circumstances, we can say that the attitudes and exercise of

domination have gone too far. Those affected by these practices, customs and structures of domination will begin to reflect in their personal world the tendencies Sullivan described. Not only will their commitment to the institution diminish, but their creative abilities to offer the full range of their talent to the work will diminish. Even out of enlightened self-interest, those responsible for the management and governance of the organization would do well to avoid those practices of domination. Beyond that, one can raise the moral question. Do institutions have the right to treat people this way?

Does this argument against institutional forms of domination imply an absolute norm of equality? Does it mean that executives must surrender their executive dining rooms, spacious offices on the top floor, their high salaries and other perquisites? There are no simple answers to these questions. Certainly when executives give themselves raises in income (salary plus stocks) four or five times the raises offered to the majority of the employees, or when executives argue for draconian economizing measures throughout the organization, except in their own expense accounts and executive perquisites, employees may justifiably express outrage. On the other hand, there may be some justification for symbolic differences in work space, uniform, and other conditions of work that are functionally related to differences in authority and responsibility. No one can offer uniform guidelines to govern the existence of and disparity in privileges within very diverse institutions. On the other hand, those disparities should raise moral questions for those in positions of leadership.

Alienation

Every leader of an organization must look closely into the members' feelings of alienation toward the organization. Every institution causes alienation among its members, simply because organizational life interferes with the personal and individual wishes and interests of the members. All members have to do what the organization demands of them or cease being a member. Given the tendency toward bureaucracy in most organizations,

with the impersonal imposition of rules, schedules, work demands, it is normal for people to feel put upon, to grumble and complain about superiors or subordinates in the organization. Alienation is a given. The question is how to keep dissatisfaction with the job at tolerable levels, and increase satisfaction and a sense of fulfillment in the job. About some levels of alienation leaders can do nothing, but they can do much to lessen other sources of alienation, sources such as obvious structures of domination. What those sources are and how to deal with them will probably differ with each particular institution.

Leaders, however, will recognize that institutional life can be an opportunity for creativity and self-fulfillment of the members. They will recognize, as well, that their organization ought to provide a quality service to their clients, thus diminishing the cynicism and alienation felt by many in response to impersonal and shoddy service organizations render them. In order to bring this change about, the leader may have to engage in a critical assessment of the institution and call attention to those structures which occasion the reproduction of domination.

The Deeper Malaise

Attending to institutional conditions which occasion the reproduction of domination, however, does not bring the leader to the most fundamental critique necessary to transform the institution. There is an even deeper malfunctioning of modern institutions, especially in industrialized western countries. This malfunctioning is due to the domination of one form of rationality, namely instrumental rationality.[5] Instrumental rationality is that use of reason which deals with the means, not the ends of organizational action. Through instrumental reason, humans analyze problems, conceptualizing the ingredients of the problem in only those aspects which seem to have a bearing on the problem. Hence, if it is a financial problem, instrumental rationality reduces the problem to one of costs and benefits, usually defined exclusively in monetary terms. If it is a production problem, then it is reduced to those ingredients that go into the production such as time, material, labor, energy, technology —

all reduced to quantifiable variables. Essential to the functioning of instrumental rationality is the *reduction* of the ingredients to one-dimensional categories, usually quantifiable in some uniform measure, for the purpose of *manipulation* and *control*. In the previous chapter, this form of rationality was seen to be inimical to charisma and substantive rationality. In his analysis of modernity, Jurgen Habermas likewise points to the intrusion of technical, instrumental rationality into all forms of human life as constituting the crisis of modernity.[6] What follows is an attempt briefly to outline his analysis in order to pursue the implications of a critique of flawed institutions for leadership.[7]

For Habermas, the linguistic intersubjectivity of social activity constitutes the foundation of society. In other words, human beings are tied to one another by means of their common understandings communicated in language. What Habermas calls the 'life form of human beings' — those activities and processes by which human beings distinguish themselves in everyday life as human beings — are anchored in the structures of language. Therefore the reproductive tasks of society are always determined by the normative self-understanding of communicatively socialized subjects.[8] That is to say, from our earliest years we are socialized through language, and we come to establish contact with other persons through language. Through language we name the world; we name ourselves; we communicate our interests and grow to understand the interests of others. Through linguistic communication, we secure a mutuality between ourselves and others in our actions and our understanding of values and meanings which we share and exchange. Through the speech of everyday life human beings negotiate social relationships among themselves; they deal with the pragmatic choices and actions that enable them to take care of their everyday responsibilities and needs. Their practical world is mediated through conversations in which mutual understanding is both presupposed and attained.

The Domination of Instrumental Rationality

With the beginnings of modernity in the foundation of the modern state and the establishment of commercialism, however,

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this world of practical, everyday communication and the life-world which it grounds is gradually changed by interest in success and control. Gradually humans learn to act not so much by a process of understanding, but by coordinating their action through the media of money or power. In the modern world two spheres of action become detached from the human life-world, economic production and political administration. This is a fact which Giddens also notes in his commentary on the separation of spheres of social activity in modern life.[9] The economic system and the action sphere of the state develop with less and less recourse to the process of communication aimed at reaching mutual understanding. They develop a logic and a set of symbols and organizational forms peculiar to themselves. Gradually the life-world of everyday life is invaded by the purposive, instrumental rationality of those systems. The human life-world is 'colonized' by the dominant technical, product-oriented world of the economic and political administrative systems. This

> rationalization of the life-world makes possible an increase in systems complexity which enlarges to such an extent that the released systemic imperatives outstrip the comprehension ability of the life-world which is instrumentalized by them.[10]

This colonization of the life-world constitutes the crisis of modernity.

The everyday life of family, church and neighborhood used to provide meanings for an overarching world view. However, the rise of science as an alternative form of meaning, the professionalization of helping relationships, the expansion of commodity forms into wider and wider areas of human interaction (packaged vacations, packaged retirement communities, dating services, etc.) the legal regulation of marital and parental relationships, the commercialization of culture — all have been destructive of a coherent world view and practical meanings about human existence.

The cultural fixation on instrumental rationality, especially with regard to economic utility and political advantage, dominates

everyone. Both the rich and the poor, men and women, black and white, Irish and Russian (among other nationalities), are left with an identity that is thinned out, problematic, denuded. The world of work, the political world, the commercial world have about them an impersonality, almost a ruthlessness. When one asks what human purposes are being served by the relentless pursuit of money, advantage, prestige and commodities, wary eyes turn in one's direction as though one has asked a stupid or an unforgivable question. Instrumental or technical rationality cannot answer such questions except in instrumental and technical terms. There seems to be a widespread belief that it is possible to derive principles of individual rights and legitimate public purposes from a position of agnosticism concerning conceptions of the good and of ultimate human purpose.[11] Yet liberal philosophical principles seem always to be contestable, because they are not founded on an anthropology, but on instrumental principles of social organization.

Habermas argues that such one-dimensional concentration on technical control, instrumental reasoning, and commercial advantage represents an ideological, self-affirming system, which is, however, ultimately self-defeating. Science is believed to provide the foundation of meaning and justification for liberal economic and political systems. Yet, the political and commercial system prevents science from operating as science must if it is to be true to its knowledge claims. That is to say, science requires that scientists enjoy the freedom to converse and share information in order to confirm or disconfirm their findings. Scientists' primary purpose is not to be serving commercial or political interests, but the interests of truth in a context of free inquiry. Hence any social structures, including bureaucratic and political institutions, which inhibit or manipulate the free exchange of ideas violates the fundamental premise of science.[12]

The Corrective of Ideal Speech Conditions

In order to ground this claim, Habermas posits the ideal speech situation. The ideal speech situation is constituted by communication and discourse where a genuine symmetry among

participants promotes an equality of dialogue where no forms of domination exist. Habermas agrees that this type of communication rarely if ever occurs, but that a careful analysis of linguistic communication and the assumptions upon which it rests point to this kind of ideal speech situation. As Bernstein points out, Habermas' analysis bears some resemblance to that of John Rawls, for they both imply that the fullest exercise of rationality requires a necessary relationship with conditions of freedom and equality in the pursuit of truth.[13]

Based on this analysis of the ideal speech condition, Habermas argues that the pursuit of science and technical control over nature and social systems needs to be reunited with the human life-world and its dialogical search for mutual understanding as the basis for social action. Habermas would not urge the surrender or abolition of scientific inquiry or instrumental control, but rather the reconnecting of both to the practical life-world of human beings, which has been neglected by both the political and economic institutions of the modern world.

Habermas would have us restore the classical notion of politics found in Aristotle, namely the attempt to arrive at a prudent understanding and judgment about what is right and just in civic affairs. Such a prudent understanding is achieved by a free and open discussion among the citizenry. It is the *polis*, the civic community, that makes the citizen capable of a 'good' life. Such understandings and judgments can never achieve the ontological uniformity and logical necessity of science, for the nature of social life is simply too variable, shifting and complex. Yet the effort to supersede this classical notion of politics with a scientific notion of politics is precisely what led to the displacement of the life-world in economic and public affairs, and to the gradual absorption of the life-world by the rationality of science, commercialization, and technical control.

This argument can perhaps be best summarized in Habermas' own words.

> In advanced industrial societies there is an escalating scale of continually expanded technical control over nature and a continually refined administration of human beings and their relations to each other by means of social

> organization. In this system, science, technology, industry, and administration interlock in a circular process. In this process the relationship of theory to praxis can now only assert itself as the purposive-rational application of techniques assured by empirical science. The social potential of science is reduced to the powers of technical control — its potential for enlightened action is no longer considered. The empirical, analytical sciences produce technical recommendations, but they furnish no answer to practical questions.[14]

Habermas continues his argument that the attempt to attain technical control by perfecting the administration of society robs the citizens of their right to control their own destiny. Politics disappears into technical administration. Hence, Habermas proposes a form of rational critique of the conditions of social life today. That critique would take the form of dialogue and discourse in a communication approaching ideal speech conditions. In such communication, people would speak as equals and communicate their concerns about the conditions in which they find themselves. Such dialogue and discourse (Habermas seems to equate discourse with argument) would surface those structural and political obstacles to autonomy and responsibility. It would likely follow that those very structural and political obstacles would also impede the conditions required for ideal speech itself.

Habermas sees such communication as therapeutic, as enlightening the participants as to the sources of their alienation and domination. Such understanding opens up more space for the participants to choose autonomy and responsibility in their own actions. On the other hand, Habermas warns that such discussions do not automatically issue in a uniform program of reform. Rather, they issue in tentative, limited agreements about what people might do in particular circumstances of their lives to move toward a more authentic and moral response to the human possibilities they envision and desire.

This brings us back to the point made earlier, namely that the exercise of rationality implies freedom and equality, but now in a reverse twist. In the course of discussing those circumstances

in their lives which *limit* ideal speech, there is the discovery of what is normative in speech. In reflecting on human speech in its distorted forms, we recognize not only the distortion, but, as a ground of *that* recognition, we recognize *what* is distorted: the ideal speech situation. Similarly, in understanding that something is violated in social life, one intuitively grasps what human relationships, work, civil association, government *should* be. Hence this kind of critical inquiry leads to normative conclusions, even though these conclusions are of a very general nature. Through such critical analysis participants acquire emancipatory knowledge. That knowledge, in turn, informs their ongoing practical discussions about how prudently to conduct their affairs in public life.

Interpretive Phenomenology in Policy Analysis

From the field of policy analysis one hears similar criticism of policy analysis based solely on the positivist model of scientifically grounded empirical enquiry. Cost-benefit analysis, separated from the cultural life-world of those affected by the policies in question, resembles the mind set of administrative regulation from above by technical experts who, based on their assumed superior knowledge, know what is good for citizens. The critique of this form of policy analysis and formation does not rest on Habermas' model of ideal speech, but rather on the phenomenological analysis of social action. This analysis uncovers that human beings are much more complex than the simplistic needs-driven models of behavioristic psychology. The model which the school of interpretive social inquiry would propose is as follows.

> . . . human beings are essentially makers of meaning; they are purposive agents who inhabit symbolically constituted cultural orders, who engage in rule-governed social practices, and whose self-identities are formed in those orders and through those practices.[15]

Though perhaps granting more agency to human beings than Giddens would accept, Jennings' analysis of the formation of self-identity in and through the social order (structures? linguistic systems?) sounds very close to both Giddens and Habermas. In such a critique of policy makers, Jennings would argue for the vitality of civic life in areas affected by policy:

- for opportunities to participate;
- for opportunities to be a member of neighborhood organizations;
- for opportunities to be involved in voluntary helping services;
- for opportunities to have access to the decision-making processes of policy formation itself.[16]

Again, these types of participation resemble Habermas' conditions of ideal speech, and seem to assume conditions of freedom and equality.

The question arises, how can this kind of critical enquiry and recapturing of the classical practice of politics take place on a broad scale? It would appear that the practice of democracy can only move beyond its half-developed state if the level of institutionally permitted learning in society is allowed to be raised.[17] While this would seem to have important practical applications in college and university programs, all institutions in society would have to become more intentionally educational. Yet the world of *realpolitik* suggests that this will not happen. Vested interests will resist surrendering their perceived economic and cultural advantages. Psychologically, people will find exposing forms of domination uncomfortable and threatening. The assumptions behind forms of domination and technical rationality have come to define reality for most people: that's the way the world is, and the way it is supposed to be; that's the way business is done. Good, steady management is conducted by tough-minded people; to talk of suffering or moral consequences is a sign of weakness, of losing one's grip.[18] Clearly, the institution will not engage in such critical self-reflection, unless leaders step forward to call the institution to self-criticism and self-renewal.

From this perspective it appears that involvement with the cultural and moral aspects of the institution may be the most critical and essential function of leadership. That is to say, institutions have to move beyond the present mechanistic and dominating bureaucracy and the ideology of efficiency to create a cultural environment — an environment in which human concerns and expressions are primary — based on substantive human values and meanings, rather than on instrumental, manipulative and control values. This will not mean abandoning concerns for productivity and efficiency; rather, it will mean processes of productivity that respect and promote human ingenuity and responsibility, and measures of efficiency that respect both the internal human environment and the external social and physical environment.

The constancy of institutional failures in both public service organizations, governmental agencies and commercial corporations, due to their lack of concern for the internal human culture of the institution and for the social and physical environment they are intended to serve, constitutes a massive scandal. The cure for such failure is not in increased scientific rigor applied to management systems, nor in additional layers of administrators to monitor the miscreants, nor indeed in the cybernetic revolution, despite the claims of still other technical experts. The cure rests with human beings deciding to recapture their life-world as a humanly fulfilling journey. Such is the task of leadership.

Implications For Leadership

What might be some implications for leaders who would address their flawed institutions? The following guidelines are by no means complete, but seem to flow from what has been developed in this chapter.

1 Recognize that the institution you serve may be flawed by structures of domination and by the exclusive promotion of functional, technical rationality. Through consultations, assessments and reflection, identify the most glaring aspects of these flaws and name the human

suffering, humiliation and alienation they cause. Look at the institutional barriers to ideal speech conditions.

2 Reflect on and articulate the human and social purposes of the organization you serve. Ask whether these purposes are served well by current institutional practices.

3 Introduce ethical questions in policy and planning discussions, as well as into labor-management relations, personnel policies, and worker-safety, product-safety considerations.

4 Institutionalize the practice of critical self-reflection at several levels of the organization, and create communication and decision-making processes for dealing with the conclusions of these self-reflection groups.

5 Recognize that knowledge is always bounded by culture and historical circumstances. Hence, critique can never transcend the limits of our own boundedness and human limitations. Therefore self-reflection, dialogue and argument are to be considered essential, ongoing elements of the institution.

6 Involvement with the cultural aspects of the organization is the most important task of the leader.

Looking Forward

Up to this point, we have sought new understandings for leadership by studying the deep structures of social action, by probing deeper into the meaning of charisma, and by studying critical analyses of institutional life. We have seen that human action is affected by the social conditions or structures in which humans find themselves. Humans monitor their responses and the responses to their responses through their practical consciousness, adjusting to what their environment seems to demand from them. In so doing, they reproduce the structures which condition their action. In this we can see how human activity constantly creates and recreates society itself. Humans are the authors of their own story, even though the plot of the story may not be to their liking. In this duality of structure, we raised the question whether the duality was always balanced between

agency and structure or whether there were occasions when agency was the more dominant and when structure was the more dominant. Charismatic leadership seemed to point to the phenomena of agency overcoming the limitations of structure or of transforming it. Yet we could also point to the common experience of structure dominating agency in the case of those institutional structures which promoted domination by class, gender, race and ethnicity. Moreover, the very structures of rationality itself could be seen to so structure situations of work, politics and economics — indeed all aspects of the life world, as to limit the human agency of individuals and groups. Hence the agency of leaders is seen as a problematic one indeed. How problematic may become evident through an analysis of the present historical context which calls forth a new kind of leadership. We turn now to the sociology of postmodernism to grasp the scope of this challenge to the very possibility of leadership.

Notes

1 Fielding, N. (1988) 'Introduction: Between micro and macro', in Fielding, N. (Ed.) *Action and Structure: Research Methods and Social Theory*, Beverly Hills, CA, Sage, p. 6.

2 Sullivan, E.V. (1990) *Critical Psychology and Pedagogy: Interpretation of the Personal World*, New York, Bergin and Garvey, pp. 84–85.

3 Sullivan (1990) pp. 94–95.

4 Sullivan (1990) pp. 102–103.

5 I will use the term 'instrumental rationality' interchangeably with the terms 'functional rationality' and 'technical rationality'. Perhaps the most telling criticism of instrumental rationality was delivered by Horkheimer and Adorno in their book, *The Dialectics of Enlightenment* (1972, New York, Herder and Herder). Albrecht Wellmer, in his book, *Critical Theory of Society* (1971, translated by J. Cumming, New York, Herder and Herder) provides an excellent summary of their critique, and ties it in with the work of Jurgen Habermas.

6 Habermas, J. (1970) *Toward a Rational Society*, Boston, Beacon Press; Habermas, J. (1971) *Knowledge and Human Interests*, Boston, Beacon Press; Habermas, J. (1973) *Theory and Practice*, Boston, Beacon Press.

7 In this analysis, I have been assisted by the commentaries on Habermas' work provided by Bernstein, Honeth, and Young: Bernstein, R.J. (1976) *The Restructuring of Social and Political Theory*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press; Honeth, A. (1987) 'Critical theory', in A. Giddens

and J. Turner (Eds) *Social Theory Today*, Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press, pp. 347–82; Young, R. (1990) *A Critical Theory of Education: Habermas and Our Children's Future*, New York, Teachers College Press.

8 With minor distinctions, Giddens, Shutz and Garfinkel would seem to agree with this, as the analysis of chapter 2 implies.

9 Giddens, A. (1984) *The Constitution of Society*, Berkeley, CA, University of California Press, p. 85.

10 Habermas, J. (1981) *Theorie das Kommunikativen Handels*, Frankfurt am Maine, pp. 232–3, quoted in Bernstein (1976).

11 See Anderson, C.W. (1987) 'Political philosophy, practical reason and policy analysis', in F. Fischer and J. Forester (Eds) *Confronting Values in Policy Analysis: The Politics of Criteria*, Newbury Park, CA, Sage, pp. 22–44.

12 Wellmer (1971), in pursuing this line of reasoning, concludes, ironically, that the fundamental arguments of Marx can only be proved or disproved in a society where science is esteemed, and where it gradually emancipates itself from control by political and commercial interests — a possibility more likely in the West than in a totalitarian state like the former Soviet Union.

13 Bernstein (1976) p. 200; Rawls, J. (1971) *A Theory of Justice*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press.

14 Habermas (1973) p. 254.

15 Jennings, B. (1987) 'Interpretation and the practice of policy analysis', in F. Fischer and J. Forester (Eds) *Confronting Values in Policy Analysis: The Politics of Criteria*, Newbury Park, CA, Sage, p. 148.

16 Jennings (1987) p. 148.

17 Young (1990) p. 42.

18 See the thoughtful essay by Amy, D. (1987) 'Can policy analysis be ethical?', in F. Fischer and J. Forester (Eds) *Confronting Values in Policy Analysis: The Politics of Criteria*, Newbury Park, CA, Sage, pp. 45–67.

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Chapter 5

Leadership in the Postmodern Context

In posing questions about the nature of and challenges to leadership from the perspectives of social theory, charisma and critical theory, I have frozen the notion of leadership in an historical vacuum. Giddens' theory of the duality of structure and agency tends to posit the agent responding to the *immediate* situation. To be sure, Giddens would understand that the immediate situation reflects the large historical trends and shifts taking place in society. The problem is that the agent rarely understands the historical framework. In the current literature on leadership one rarely sees the larger historical perspective treated. This is to ignore challenges to leadership which only an historical perspective suggests.

This excursion beyond the familiar landscape of leadership literature, however, appeared more daunting than the others. Venturing into the realm of historians implied an enormous journey across a massive land mass. I knew at the outset that I had to utilize historical maps which summarized large periods of history, in order to grasp the major transitions in ideas and culture which has brought us to what many scholars were labeling the 'postmodern period'. Although historians were able to sum up the modern period against which postmodernism had so many complaints, I had to dig deeper for an understanding of where the generative ideas of the modern period had come. This, in turn, led me back to the medieval synthesis, from which the modern world had so decisively broken away.

I am afraid, therefore, that the report of this excursion may fail on two counts. For the non-historian, the report may appear to bog down in a tedium of too much history. For the historian, the report will appear as a gross simplification of complex cross-currents of ideas and schools of thought, developing over long periods of time. Both complaints are legitimate. On the other hand, the mapping of these large transitions to the postmodern period provides the kind of substantive clues to where a new generation of leaders must venture.

The argument of this chapter contends that in the present the serious exercise of leadership cannot be carried on with the tacit assumptions underlying modernity or the industrial age, or classical liberalism — at least not without serious qualifications of those assumptions. In order to understand what those assumptions are, and to understand the shift that has taken place and is still taking place in what might be called a postmodern world view, it will be necessary to chart the development of the modern world view as it was fashioned by the Englightenment. In turn, as a way of highlighting those assumptions, a charting of the medieval world view provides the contrasting world view against which that of the Englightenment stands out in stark contrast. While the political, economic and cultural effects of the Enlightenment continued into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the assumptions and myths of the Enlightenment began to harden into ideological positions. The twentieth-century western communities failed to realize the controlling influence such an ideology was exerting on their world view, leaving them unprepared to understand the excesses to which such ideological blinders led.

Postmodernism arises from the bewilderment of the modern world at what it has wrought. Despite advances along many fronts, modernity has also witnessed the opposite of all it had promised: war and destruction of unparalleled proportions; a pathological rationality willing to sacrifice the universe on the altars of its logic; alarming ecological destruction; failure to eradicate debilitating poverty and starvation; the flourishing of tribal and ethnic violence; the arming of dictators by supposedly enlightened nations of the West, and the training of their police in the refinements of torture and terror by agencies of those

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same enlightened nations. The reappraisal of the assumptions of the modern world view has led to a variety of postmodern world views, some of which we will explore because of their direct implications for leadership.[1]

The Enlightenment Ideal

In order to understand the magnitude of the Enlightenment project it is helpful to see how radically it broke with the medieval world view. In what follows, I will offer summary propositions which, in historical reality, were much more nuanced and historically circumscribed. Such an attempt at distillation is justified, I believe, for purposes of highlighting significant contrasts between world views. Consider it a literary device employed to make a point; like all such devices, distortion is expected, without thereby negating the point being made.

The medieval world view was like a unified tapestry constructed of many threads woven together.[2] It involved not only a cosmology (a theory of how all the universe was held together, from the stars and planets, to living and non-living forms on the earth; explaining how the heavenly bodies influenced earthly bodies and how changes in material things on earth took place), but a metaphysics (a theory of how all beings were brought into existence and sustained in being by primary and secondary causes and indeed by the 'uncaused cause' or God). This world view also included a psychology (a theory of the internal body-spirit relationships in humans, and by analogy, how humans, angels and God know and love), a salvation theology (a theory about the fallen nature of humans and their redemption, about original sin, the function of suffering and atonement, the earth as a 'vale of tears' or as a place where humans were tested and tried and prepared for eternal life), and a political theory (God was the supreme authority and lawgiver who established covenant relationships with humans which Moses, the prophets and priests carried out in the Old Covenant and which Jesus, the apostles, their successors the bishops, and especially the Bishop of Rome and those to whom they delegated authority — kings, barons, lords, judges, sheriffs, etc. — carried out in the New

Covenant). In short, the medieval world view was integrated and total. It was a wedding in practice of religion, politics, law, economics. It was held together by a philosophical and theological synthesis that explained everything (or was thought to explain everything).

Hence, this world view placed humans in a state of close relationship to God through the 'Chain of Being'. God was intimately involved in his creation; humans could know God through contemplating his works. Humans knew God as a saving God, who, although he punished them for their sins through sickness, suffering and natural calamities, nonetheless would, after their testing, purification and contrition take them into eternal life. Whatever happened in this life on earth was, ultimately, 'God's will'. In one sense, humans had only to obey or accept God's will as it was revealed in the ordinary circumstances of their lives in order to be saved. If one was born as a peasant farmer, that was God's will; if one's child died in infancy, it was God's will; if one caught pneumonia, one had to suffer through it, for God had obviously sent this as a trial or as a punishment. This world view can be presented in a simplified chart (see figure 5.1) which lists some of the generalizations by which the people understood nature, society and human life.

The medieval world view did not disintegrate all at once. During the Renaissance, astronomers began to disprove a geocentric cosmology. Humanists and philosophers challenged church authority. The sin-dominated view of human behavior came under question. Gradually the medieval world view began to crumble in the face of rapidly coalescing forces throughout Europe in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Collectively, these forces declared independence and autonomy: independence from God, from the church, from 'laws of nature' which justified the feudal distribution of power and wealth, from nature itself, insofar as human life was believed to be subject to nature's vagaries, and from nature itself as the natural environment for humans. The Enlightenment mentality demanded autonomy to build whatever collective social and political structures would serve all the people (even though monarchy was retained in a variety of forms). It was to be the destiny of the people of the Enlightenment to make their own history, to

Figure 5.1 A medieval world view

The Universe is all interconnected through the Chain of Being under God.

Nature:	God is the source of everything. He acts indirectly in nature through natural laws of nature. He also directly intervenes in nature. The earth is the center of God's universe. The heavenly spheres govern the earth's cycles of seasons, rain and sun, heat and cold, under the influence of God. God allows diseases, plagues, floods, indigestion. Sometimes they are punishments for sin; sometimes a warning to a wavering conscience; sometimes simply a test of a community's faith.
Society:	The forms of society are given. One remains in the social role and setting into which one is born; that is the will of God. One exercises social influence in the community by appealing to those in authority who control what is allowed and not allowed in social life. This public and private life of the community is governed by natural laws and human laws. In either case, authority to interpret and execute these laws comes through a chain of delegated authority: from God to the Church to civil authorities to local authorities.
The Human Person:	The human person is a child of God. Although a natural descendent of Adam and therefore inheriting Adam's sinful nature (original sin), the human person is saved by God's mercy extended in the person of Jesus Christ. The human person is made up of body and soul, of flesh and spirit. The body dies, but the soul lives on in eternity. Man's highest faculties are spiritual, his intellect and will. The purpose of human life is to save one's soul. Life on earth is a dramatic struggle to overcome sin through the Grace of God and the assistance of the Church. All other purposes of human life must be subservient to this overriding goal.

create themselves as individuals and as a community. For some, this was an aggressive rejection of the idea of God and the legitimacy of the church. For others, it was a firm choice to take charge of one's life, even if one believed in God.

The Enlightenment project proposed that human beings govern themselves. They would govern themselves armed with two essential tools, human reason and science. In theory they could create their own state, appoint or elect other persons to run the necessary offices of government, and pass laws to protect and promote the freedom and happiness of the individual and the community. By using reason and the methods of science they could discover the natural causes of things and thereby mitigate and control much of what happens in the natural, political and economic orders. The state, as the expression of the common will of the citizens, would have civil authority over special-interest groups in the community, whether they were made up of nobles, merchants, bankers or bishops.

Figure 5.2 An Enlightenment world view

The Universe is interconnected somehow through quantifiable relationships; God may or may not have something to do with it. If he did, he was more like a clockmaker who made a clock, wound it up, and then left it to work on its own.

Nature:	Everything in nature has a natural cause. Humans can discover these causes through science, and through science control or mitigate the harmful effects of nature. The universe is heliocentric. Humankind's place in such a universe is not necessarily fixed or central.
Society:	The forms of society are not based on natural or divine law; they are man-made through a social contract; humans can unmake them. Rulers do not rule by divine right; they exercise authority given them by the people. No one is necessarily fixed in social position by birth or tradition or class (this fluidity does not apply to gender, however). Natural or man-made laws should serve the common good, not the special interests of the few. Citizens have the right to participate in and influence debates on public policy.
The Human Person:	Individuals have their rights and responsibilities that are theirs by nature and by social contract. The individual is free to become master of his own fate. Within common constraints imposed by the common good, humans are free to manage their own lives. Whether or not God exists, humans must take responsibility for themselves and for their world. Human affairs do not need revelation or the Church as guides; human reason and human enterprise are sufficient.

How would these enlightened people sustain such a self-governing community? The state would create a system of schools which would teach the nation's youth (or at least its sons, the middle and upper-class ones especially) how to use reason in human affairs and how to use science on behalf of the community. This great experiment by which citizens would participate in the political process of governing themselves was to be carried forward by reason and science, developed and taught in the schools and the universities.

This world view can similarly be charted by listing some apropos generalizations under the categories of nature, society and the human person (see figure 5.2). This world view would work its way through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and well into the twentieth. Along the way, it would link up with another powerful historical development, the Industrial Revolution, which was itself fueled by Enlightenment thought. With its devotion to science, the individual, and rationality, the Enlightenment world view embraced the emerging ideas of progress, technological invention, and the mass production of

material goods to satisfy basic human needs. Subsequently these needs became expanded to an enormous range of commercially produced consumables. From the marriage of the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution grew an ideology that has powerfully influenced the development of the modern mind in the West, an ideology often referred to as classical liberalism.

The Emergence of Individualism

It is important to underscore here that the major project of the Enlightenment was the positioning of the individual at center stage. No longer would tradition or church authorities or elders determine what was right or true. The individual was to be the source of truth and moral principle. Using reason, the individual was to arrive at truth, either by deductive logic, or by scientific proof. Similarly, the individual could arrive at moral imperatives by reasoning about their absolute character. Furthermore, it was the individual, as the basic social entity, and his freedoms which were to guide the establishment of the governing principles of the state. In the field of economic enterprise, it was the individual who would pursue individual gain in the free competition of the market place. As the receiver of a bounteous economic productivity, the individual would achieve ultimate self-realization in consuming a broad range of commodities from education to designer jewelry, from sports cars to tropical vacations.

To be sure, there was a complementary strain of civic republicanism which tended to restrain the individual, by concern for the common good. Churches, civic associations, and the interdependences and close ties of village life tended to promote values of cooperation, and provision for the common welfare. Nevertheless, these sentiments were viewed as romantic and soft, when it came to the 'real business of life', namely, trade, commerce, making one's way, achieving success and increased status.

This view of the individual became one of the foundations of classical liberalism. Through some guiding hand, it was assumed, each individual could adopt a self-seeking, instrumental stance toward others and yet uphold a commitment to social

harmony. This abnegation of an ethic of mutual concern was to weaken social solidarity, leaving the regulation of social behavior in the hands of the state. Yet, without some consensus about what is morally desirable, the democratic state has little to guide it in regulating public behavior except the very instrumental rationality reflected in its self-seeking individual citizens. Of course, the political pressures of competing interest-groups push the state's exercise of such rationality toward political expediency and the self-interest of those governing the state, further compounding the loss of a commitment to the common good. This inability to balance the demands of individual freedom with a concern for the common good has led to one of the crises of the postmodern world.

The Disenchantment of Nature

Along with individualism, the Enlightenment enshrined rationality and its most advanced expression, science. Through science human beings were to understand the laws that governed the operation of nature, from the movement of the stars to the causes of headaches, from the minerals which nourish the human body to the geological causes of earthquakes. As more and more knowledge about the natural environment accumulated, the categories and vocabulary of science dominated the language and the imaginations of humans as they confronted nature. The celebration of nature by poets and painters was viewed more and more as subjective fantasy — entertaining and captivating the audience to see nature ever fresh and intriguing, but, when all was said and done, not containing the truth about nature. That truth was contained in scientific findings dealing with atoms and molecules, chemical compounds and magnetic forces. The primitive world of spirits and totems, forces and mysteries that required a reverential, if not religious stance toward nature, was stripped of all these 'anthropomorphisms'. The world of religious mystics was denuded of the spirit of God brooding over the waters, of God's grandeur shining forth in stars and planets, in the delicate lineaments of a leaf, in the majestic power of a river in spring force. With the knowledge of how nature 'worked' came the power to control and manipulate

nature. Dams were built to control flooding; pesticides developed to control crop infestation; antibiotics discovered to treat diseases; the nature of electro-magnetic waves deciphered in order to harness multiple applications of electricity.

Beyond the knowledge of how to control nature emerged the understanding of how to exploit nature for commercial purposes. The harvesting of food and natural resources began to be planned and enlarged beyond the family farm and the entrepreneurial prospector. As technology created both the tools to exploit nature and the processes for repackaging nature in consumable forms, nature seemed to provide an inexhaustible source of material production and consumption. With the mass production and the artificialization of nature, humans lost direct contact with the primary natural processes of growth, decay, and regeneration, and interdependence of natural processes in the environment.

The Disenchantment of Humanity

Furthermore, the success of the natural sciences led to the assumption that the social and human sciences should imitate the methods and perspectives of natural science. More and more of the social, cultural, economic and political world was subjected to scientific analysis. To reduce the complexity of the social and human world, however, the scientific method had to search for a very few variables or categories which could explain most or all of the social and interpersonal behavior of humans. As humans applied the methods of the natural sciences to the study of their personal and social 'natural worlds' they began to dissect them by means of reductionist categories such as 'drive'; 'need', 'instinct', 'motive'. Organizations were viewed as large machines driven by a few variables such as authority, hierarchy, status, efficiency. Laws of supply and demand, laws of 'the market' were derived for economics. Through the process of the social and human sciences, the human and social world became 'rationalized'. Reasons for social and interpersonal behavior could be adduced; social science appeared to explain everything, or most of everything. Through such a process of specialized, but fragmented social disciplines, the social world became

disenchanted. The Emperor's clothes were seen to be fabricated out of fictional thread. There were few, if any, natural laws in society. Society was governed primarily by contracts entered into by self-seeking agents.

Under the microscope of the human sciences, even human beings became 'disenchanted'. Once their 'problem' had been identified, instrumental reason could come up with a solution to return people back to a state of equilibrium. Natural interpretations of human behavior were cast aside as 'anthropomorphic'.

Hence we have the ultimate irony of human beings finding themselves estranged from themselves by the very process of attempting to understand themselves. Since the existence of a subject encountering other subjects in interpersonal dialogue is denied by the explanations of reductionist psychology and social psychology; since humans as economic agents are reduced to consumers and producers, all quantifiable in economic formulas; since humans as political agents are looked upon as electors whose votes are gathered by political rhetoric and deception and as objects of public policy to be uniformly obedient to the dictates of the state; since humans as objects of study by biochemists are seen to be systems of neurologically interrelated cells — in short, since humans have been reduced to an assemblage of things, they no longer exist as natural entities in their own right as human beings.

The drive to subject all things to the analysis of science and scientific reasoning (understanding science as based on the model of physical science, the prime analogate of all sciences), ultimately becomes problematic, not simply for the preservation of the natural physical environment, but also for the preservation of the natural human environment. The inability to see 'the natural' as a complex reality, tampering with which should be done with extreme caution, continues to affect public policy in the present, and has led to a postmodern critique of scientific and technological rationality.

The Myth of Progress

Related to the compulsion to improve or transform nature is the assumption that history is a unidirectional process moving

forward or upward. Civilization is seen as advancing by stages. Relatively self-subsistent primitive tribal societies guided by superstition and tradition advanced in some regions to urban centers which enjoyed increased trade, a money system, a more cosmopolitan culture, more centralized governing structures, and a more developed legal and police system. Civilization then 'advanced' to empires and nation states, in which government became separated from religion, and business and commerce were largely in private hands. National identity, rather than tribal, ethnic or religious identity was primary. Everyday life became interwoven with and regulated by a complex of social institutions. This movement was seen as guided by increases in rationality, science and objective knowledge of the world. As civilization spread forward, human knowledge increased, cultural sensitivities were raised, human welfare — in the form of better health care, nutrition, housing, sanitation, transportation, education — advanced. In short, human beings were seen to be better off, happier, wiser and more fulfilled, as history unfolded and moved forward, guided by advances in human knowledge and science. The classical liberal world view saw science and technology, now wedded to capitalist industry and invention, and under the banner of representative democracy, leading to greater freedom for the individual, greater rationality in civic and international affairs, and greater harmony among peoples.

It is not difficult to understand how these myths of individualism, technical rationality and progress hardened into an ideology. Such an ideology placed the industrial West in a superior position to the 'underdeveloped' rest of the globe and rationalized economic, political and military expansion into those lands to bring them the blessings of this higher civilization. The contemporary, postmodern world view now questions this ideology and the myths upon which it was founded.

The Postmodern Critique of Modernity

While the assumptions behind the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution continue to influence national priorities around

the world, there has been a growing disenchantment with those assumptions and the phenomena associated with them. Not only among intellectuals and artists, but among people seeking alternatives in family life, in work, in political and educational associations, and in life-style, one finds an articulated indictment of the modern world. This has led to new associations among women, among environmentalists, among pacifists and believers in non-violence, among minorities seeking multicultural harmony and autonomy, among artists exploring non-traditional art forms and anti-establishment perspectives, among religious groups seeking a more authentic experience of community and the sacred in human experience, in a variety of family and communal enterprises seeking more natural forms of material production and consumption. Philosophers, novelists, educators, and social theorists explore dimensions of a postmodern world view, much of it a negative critique of modernity.

The postmodern person is profoundly conscious of the failures of modernity. The myth of continuous progress of the human race under the guidance of science and rationality can no longer stand up to the evidence. In the twentieth century, two world wars and numerous regional wars unleashed destructive weaponry against both combatants and citizens; extermination camps, torture chambers, widespread political imprisonment, and intensified state surveillance of all citizens, intimidation and terrorism, both real and symbolic, abound. Nuclear weapons represent the height of military irrationality, but its lesser forms of irrationality are evidence enough to challenge the assumption of human rationality.

Beyond the violence of war and nationalistic oppression, one finds other evidence of impulsive and random cruelty, from domestic violence to inter-racial and inter-ethnic violence. The self-destruction of illegal drugs and the cynical conduct of drug-related businesses, given what is common knowledge about the effects of drug abuse, challenges belief in the rationality and integrity of human beings.

Beyond the violence is the evidence of wide-spread malnutrition and starvation of peoples, allowed to continue despite the scientific and economic resources to feed the world. The dramatic plight of starving people points to the connection

between economic priorities of nations who spend such a disproportionate percentage of their national budgets for weapons and high profile industrial projects, before attending to the necessary agricultural base and food distribution systems for the feeding of all people.

When it comes to the rational conduct of business, government and public service, the evidence again appears contrary to the myth. Even were one to put aside the accounts of corruption in these institutions, one can point to bureaucratic rigidities that work against the very goals of the institution, policy initiatives that end up effecting the very opposite among the people for whom it was intended, turf battles among scientists or executives which delayed or destroyed promising initiatives. As Baldridge put it:

> The concept of decision-making is a delusion. Decisions are not really made; instead they come unstuck, are reversed, get unmade during the execution, or lose their impact as powerful political groups fight them.[3]

The work of March and Simon has demonstrated how limited is the rationality of decision-making, in the best cases, in organizational life.[4] But when one adds to that evidence the daily revelations of deceit, corruption, venality, illegal wheeling and dealing at all levels of government and corporate life, then the credibility and trust of the ordinary citizen in the rationality and morality of those who govern society is massively eroded.

The evidence about the human individual as the source of truth and moral principle is hardly less sanguine. Studies in criminal and abnormal psychology reveal the presence of irrational forces in every person. Among 'normal' people those forces are usually held in check, unless under severe stress they erupt into rage and violence. Among abnormal people we find these irrational forces revealed in acts of sadism and brutality, or in acts of deceit, manipulation and dishonor. Other studies in social psychology reveal that our presentation of self in everyday life is a continual exercise in image management; the self is really the image that people reflect back to us, rather than some secret subject (the real me) who is hiding behind the exterior

actor. Whether the image-management analysis is a metaphor by which to describe human social behavior, or whether image management is all there is to human social behavior, is an argument still conducted among social psychologists.[5] It raises, however, fundamental questions about the supposed rational and moral motives behind human behavior. Freud will not go away. The hidden agenda behind human behavior, hidden sometimes even from the agent himself or herself, is always lurking in our suspicions.

Furthermore, individualism in public life is coming to be seen as destructive, both of the individual and of the community. The view that individuals, acting out of self-interest, accepting only those constraints which protect them against similar rapacious moves by their neighbors, are the foundation of social life, is discredited by the historical facts, even though it still underlies much of the political and economic rhetoric of the present. The myth of the market or the hidden hand behind economic affairs is seen to be more and more open to question. The state has had to intervene to restrain capitalists from the extremes of their economic activity. Such interventions as child labor laws, minimum wage laws, and laws governing worker safety and insurance, and the strong resistance to them by capital are clear evidence that 'the market' is not neutral and self correcting.

The individual, whatever economic class he or she belongs to, has become increasingly privatized. That is, involvement in public affairs by citizens has atrophied. More and more, politics and government are left in the hands of the 'professionals'. Furthermore, a view of work as a personal vocation which elicits a commitment to quality and service, has similarly eroded under the attraction of private leisure-time activities. For an increasing number of people, work is simply a way to earn the money necessary to support a private life-style of consumption. As the individual withdraws from meaningful involvement with work, with political concerns, with local and neighborhood community activity, the private life becomes centered around entertainment, hobbies and family. This kind of circumscribed life hardly appears to represent the fulfillment of the enlightenment dream of self-governing persons, joined with their

Figure 5.3 The postmodern world view

The universe continually defies science's efforts to understand its basic mechanisms. The more we know, the more we discover unsuspected layers of the material universe: quarks, black holes, antimatter, etc. The more we know, the closer we seem to come to the unpredictable, the uncontrollable, the chaos interwoven with order.

Nature:	Our badly wounded natural environment may not be able to survive humankind's destructive impact. Science has been used against nature in the service of commodity production and profit. Energy and other non-renewable natural resources have verifiable limits; hence the rate of consumption has to be limited. The relationship between humans and nature has to go beyond stewardship to harmony. Our separation from and exploitation of nature destroys the nature in us.
Society:	Society is a house of mirrors, a masquerade, a continuous, self-serving commercial. It is not rational; it is driven by greed, power seeking, and inflated egos. Even the well-intentioned have no sense of who or what is pulling the strings. Nobody trusts or believes the government or big business. Among citizens, outbreaks of racial, ethnic, and religious violence raise questions about our ability to tolerate pluralism and about the viability of a nation state which embraces various ethnic and racial groups. Academia is found often to be self-serving and bending to the influence of the political economy. Language itself, the basis for social communication, is seen as a tool of power.
The Human Person:	The human person does not know who he or she is. The unconscious is a primary irrational force in every person, influencing our choices and responses in ways we neither know nor can completely control. Our self-creation is a performance of control and management of public images, behind which we are not sure there is a subject. Everyone has a hidden agenda. Heroism is suspect, if not out of fashion. Consumption is status, self-fulfillment, heaven. 'Just do it', 'Leave me alone', are the prevailing attitudes.

community in the pursuit of a meaningful common life inspired by high human ideals. Rather it represents a passive, adolescent kind of life taken up with frivolity and inconsequential, self-centered involvement, devoid of meaning and heroic commitment.

This pessimistic world view may be summed up in figure 5.3 under the categories of nature, society and the human person.

The postmodern world view may also be summed up in a series of 'don'ts'.

1 Don't trust the government.
2 Don't trust the banks.
3 Don't trust salespeople.
4 Don't trust the police.

5 Don't trust your insurance company.
6 Don't trust your doctor.
7 Don't trust your priest, minister, rabbi, mullah.
8 Don't trust your lawyer.
9 Don't trust the scientist.
10 Don't trust the university.
11 Don't trust anybody.
12 Don't trust your mind or your emotions.
13 Don't trust logic, statistics, scientific proof.
14 Don't trust language.
15 Don't trust yourself.

Such a negative world view can lead either to cynicism and the espousal of anarchy, or to despair and the espousal of nihilism. It can also occasion, as it has, a neo-conservative reaffirmation of classical liberalism. The modern world stripped of all illusion is not a pretty landscape. The disenchantment of nature and society and of the human person by science carried over to the disenchantment of science itself. Nothing is pure; all is tainted by uncertainty, egoism, calculated manipulation. The postmodern person knows the truth and it is not nice or kindly.

Options in a Postmodern World

The postmodern person is, nevertheless, left with choices. One choice is to accept the bleak conclusion that we must simply lower our sights and live in a world of competition and deception, and survive by our wits, beating the competition at their own game, because we know what the game is. This leaves the individual (and perhaps his or her family) to stand alone against the world, carving out a space for freedom and individuality and comfort, and leaving the rest of the world to its own fate. Whether or not that space can ever be satisfying or secure is in question, since it is impossible to live in modern society in isolation from all institutions — and yet those institutions are by definition untrustworthy. Whether a society composed of citizens with such isolationist and adversarial attitudes could long

survive the stresses of countless daily deceptions is doubtful, although some pure, free market ideologues say that it could, and could thrive at that. What they do not say in public, however, is that such survival would require an enormous national police force and an enlarged international defense system.

Another option would be to attempt a more balanced assessment of the modern world and to adopt a more hopeful stance toward the future, to nurture what I call a postmodern sensibility. While not denying the truth of the negative assessment of the modern world, this postmodern sensibility would include other considerations in the mapping of the cultural and social landscape. While science and technology have been used badly by many capitalist enterprises, some results of science and technology have been beneficial to nature and human society, whether one considers vaccines against lethal diseases or communication technologies. Some government actions have been beneficial, whether or not one considers health benefits for the elderly, the provision of free public education, the provision of pure water and public sanitation and, despite its flaws, even the mail service.

Furthermore, although human beings have done some terrible things to one another, human interactions are not all destructive and deceptive. One can point to countless examples of generosity and sacrifice on behalf of others, and to the small, but significant kindnesses ordinary people extend to one another in everyday life. While it is true that people create an image of themselves which they present to others, that is not necessarily deceptive, but simply be the way they want to be 'themselves'.

The landscape begins to appear more mixed, less one-dimensional.[6] There are examples of heroism and altruism as well as examples of deception and violence; examples of corporations producing high quality and useful products, as well as examples of shoddy, environmentally and humanly poisonous products; examples of good as well as corrupt government officials.

On the other hand, we have to face the truth of the darker side of the modern world and look at the full reality of human potential for both good and destruction. If a postmodern person were to face this world with hope, what would that imply?

Possibilities of Hope

Hopeful postmodern persons would need to adopt a new way of understanding themselves, their environment, their responsibilities to public life, and adopt a new perspective on science and human knowledge — in short, develop a postmodern sensibility. What that means can only be briefly spelled out here, but it would involve the following guidelines:

- Acknowledge the darker side of our nature — the warrior, the killer, the aggressor, the calculator, the manipulator, the thief, the exploiter — in a word, our vices. That part of our nature is there, whether we like it or not, and it will not go away by simply ignoring or denying it. It will not be controlled by repression and punishment, but rather by the cultivation of the other side of our nature, namely the virtues. Although we may never achieve the moral certitude sought by Kant, we can believe in virtues as the true source of human fulfillment, finding deep satisfaction in relationships of honesty, caring, respect and trust. We also need to *expect* failures and to treat them with compassion, a compassion that flows out of self-knowledge. We will not escape the dark side of ourselves, but we need not wallow in guilt and shame. If we can begin to love our better selves, we can begin to love our whole selves, and that includes the murkiness and silliness, the anger and fear. Compassion for ourselves and for others in abundance will enable us to heal relationships.

- Recognize that progress in human affairs is neither automatic nor guaranteed. It is crucial to recognize that we live in a world precariously close to collapse, to violent upheavals, to irrational totalitarian options, to the worst forms of social Darwinism. The modern world has squandered resources, opportunities, dreams and frustrated untapped reservoirs of human energy. The challenges facing the postmodern world in terms of environmental destruction, the collapse of our economic

systems under the burden of international debt and the demands of millions for access to the commodities enjoyed by relatively few, the danger of the rise of militarism in a world of easy access to technologies of mass destruction and surveillance — these and other challenges are staggering in their dimensions. Our knowledge is limited, our ability to control human failure is limited. Our ability to reverse old hostilities and hatreds is limited. So there are no guarantees. Not to accept the challenge, however, is to hasten the turmoil and chaos that will follow.

- Recognize that capital, since it is produced by the community, belongs to the community. That applies to national capital as well as to international capital. Hence there has to be a greater balance between private gain and public benefit. What specific economic policies are needed to effect this balance remain to be worked out. But the principle must hold for all.

- Recognize the complex ecological connections in the present, not only among systems of air, energy, water and land, but also between living systems and the food chain. Recognize also the long history of humans' relationship to nature — to the land, to growing things, to patterns and rhythms of the seasons — all of which have become incorporated into human cultural forms and provide a sense of individual and communal identity. Humans need to re-establish a sense of unity and wholeness with nature, to appreciate the nature in human nature.

- Recognize the relational nature of human existence. We are not the source of our own sense of morals or our own knowledge. We exist in a web of relationships in space and in time. Our identity is grounded in that web, as is our sense of what is true, fitting, morally acceptable and desirable, what is beautiful and heroic. The web of relationships, moreover, is not limited to those immediately around us and before us, but extends ultimately to

the whole universe. That web is our inheritance, and we are obliged to cherish, protect and honor it.

- Recognize the partiality of knowledge as well as the different levels of understanding and the different perspectives each person brings to the conversation. Hence, in pursuing the truth, no one person can speak for all. Conversation and dialogue are as necessary for the conduct of everyday public and private life as breathing. In this regard, recognize the limitations of instrumental rationality. It is good for solving some problems, but it cannot ground reasons why one solution should be preferred over another in a rich and multidimensional view of human life. Instrumental rationality needs to bridge its divorce from substantive rationality, that reasoning about what is important and sensible for human beings to do in order to promote a truly human life in community. Understanding human beings as self-monitoring and self-directing agents who seeek to pursue subjectively meaningful life-plans, policy makers must include those toward whom policy is directed into the deliberative process. As goals and values of the policy are being formulated, they can see how the policy goes with or against their life-plans, and can argue the public good, since they make up that public.

Based on these understandings, the postmodern person can continue the journey with hope in the future. But the adventure is conducted with humility — knowing our propensity for deception, destruction and foolishness. It is likewise conducted with compassion — knowing how often we will need to forgive and to move on again. It will be conducted with greater calm, knowing that as part of nature, we are both transitory and yet connected to everything, and that we will not, therefore, be lost.

Implications for Leadership

Based on a hopeful response to the postmodern condition, a very different view of leadership begins to emerge than one

would find in the current popular literature on leadership. The challenges of the postmodern world urge leaders to adopt a postmodern sensibility. Such a sensibility is skeptical of the utopian rhetoric of classical liberalism. The promotion of individual happiness and freedom at the expense of the environment, community, public involvement, and civic responsibility cannot be the driving ideology of leadership, especially when that happiness and freedom is equated with unbridled commodity consumption. The exclusive concentration on technical solutions to critical social and human problems has to be changed toward a grounding of such instrumental rationality in more substantive considerations of what constitutes a full and rich human life.

Hence, leaders in the postmodern world are called to engage the challenge with humility, knowing that their own understanding is limited, and that the possibilities for genuine social progress are threatened on all sides by irrationality, greed and deception. Humility does not imply lowered aspirations. On the contrary, leaders are challenged to see the agenda as a moral agenda, calling forth the best that is in us to reverse the tragedies of this century. At the same time, however, leaders have to help their people come to terms with the darker side of the human heart, to name the destruction that it causes, and to cleanse its poison with the life-giving goodness which the human heart has in abundance.

Knowing that the real task facing the postmodern world is a moral task, and at the same time knowing the ingenious human capacity to compromise that task, the leader needs to teach compassion. Compassion does not mean rationalizing or excusing human weakness. It means, rather, the courage to name it, and then forgive it, and then to get on with the task again. Compassion means the ability to forgive because one knows one's own need for forgiveness. Compassion anticipates moral compromises, knows that even the best effort of a group will contain some egoism, some self-posturing. In other words, compassion understands that human virtue is never pure, and in forgiving the impurity, accepts the human condition as it is, not as a utopian ideal would have it be. Compassion does not prevent the leader from standing up to deception, to injustice, to arrogance and dishonesty. In so doing, however, the leader has to remember

not to fight back with the same immoral methods. The task is to convince the opposition that it is in their own best interests, even the best interests of the stockholders, to conduct themselves morally, seeking the common good first and letting profit and power flow from that.

The postmodern leader should know that, given the bounded rationality of individuals and even of whole institutions, discussion, dialogue and soliciting divergent points of view is the only way to approach the better solution to problems. In those discussions, the opinions of specialists must be balanced by questions about the human import of proposed solutions. Instrumental rationality must dance with substantive rationality. No longer can major corporate and institutional policies be decided without considerations of their impact on the natural and the social environment. The contributions of science and technology will remain critical to these discussions; it is simply that they will not dominate them.

Finally, the leader will need to communicate the fragility of the enterprise. Nothing is guaranteed. Success will most certainly be mixed with failure, because the influence of older habits and attitudes from the modern world view are still very strong, if not dominant in many circumstances. Progress, if it is to be made at all, will require their best efforts, their most moral efforts.

These considerations about the postmodern sensibility of leaders will appear too soft for many. The macho attitudes towards leadership still abound: play hardball; crunch the enemy; don't show your trump cards; kindness is weakness; nice guys finish last. Oddly enough, the transformation of Eastern Europe was accomplished by playwrights, university students and workers through non-violent rallies. Oddly enough, the international agenda is disarmament. Oddly enough, the environment is on everyone's mind these days. Oddly enough, the inside traders and government tough guys are going to jail; the corporate raiders are going bankrupt. The boys in the back room who espouse these obsolete views of leadership are out of touch with reality. The price to pay for these illusions, as Lyotard observes, is terror, and the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have given us as much terror as we can take.[7] We must be human if we are to survive. 'Soft' works.

Notes

1 The postmodern developments in the fine and performing arts, where perhaps the first and most sustained revolt against modernism began will receive little or no treatment here. I confess to the empoverishment of my excursion due to this decision. In this overview of the modern and postmodern world I have been assisted by the work of many scholars. While the synthesis is mine, it would not have been possible without their work. Prominent among these scholars are: Robert Anchor, Ernest Becker, Robert Bellah, Peter Berger, Richard Bernstein, C.A. Bowers, S.N. Eisenstadt, Anthony Giddens, David Ray Griffin, Jurgen Habermas, Scott Lash, Jean-Francois Lyotard and Donald Oliver. Also refer to the following specific works: Anchor, R. (1967) *The Enlightenment Tradition*, New York, Harper & Row; Becker, E. (1968) *The Structure of Evil*, New York, The Free Press; Bellah, R. (1975) *The Broken Covenant: American Civil Religion in Time of Trial*, New York, Seabury Press; Berger, P. (1967) *The Sacred Canopy*, Garden City, NY, Doubleday; Berger, P., Berger, B. and Kellner, H. (1974) *The Homeless Mind*, New York, Vintage Books; Bernstein, R.J. (1976) *The Restructuring of Social and Political Theory*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press; Bowers, C.A. (1987) *Elements of a Post-Liberal Theory of Education*, New York, Teachers College Press; Eisenstadt, S.N. (1973) *Tradition, Change and Modernity*, New York, John Wiley & Sons; Giddens, A. (1985) *The Nation State and Violence*, Berkeley, CA, University of California Press; Griffin, D.R. (Ed.) (1990) *Sacred Interconnections: Postmodern Spirituality, Political Economy and Art*, Albany, NY, State University of New York Press; Habermas, J. (1975) *Legitimation Crisis*, Boston, Beacon Press; Lash, S. (1990) *Sociology of Postmodernism*, London, Routledge; Lyotard, J-F. (1984) *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, Minneapolis, MN, University of Minnesota Press; Oliver, D.W. (1990) *Education, Modernity and Fractured Meaning*, Albany, NY, State University of New York Press; Sullivan, W.M. (1986) *Reconstructing Public Philosophy*, Berkeley, CA, University of California Press.

2 Peter Berger referred to it as the 'Sacred Canopy', in his book of the same title.

3 Baldridge, V. (1975) 'Rules for a machiavellian change agent: Transforming the entrenched professional organization', in V. Baldridge and T. Deal (Eds) *Managing Change in Educational Organizations*, Berkeley, CA, McCutchan, p. 386.

4 March, J.G. and Simon, H.A. (1958) *Organizations*, New York, Wiley.

5 Brissett, D. and Edgley, C. (1990) 'The dramaturgical perspective', in Brissett, D. and Edgley, C. (Eds) *Life as Theater*, 2nd ed., New York, Aldine de Gruyter, pp. 14–35.

6 For a more constructive approach to the postmodern world, see the collection of essays in Griffin (1990).

7 Lyotard (1984) p. 81.

Chapter 6

Leadership in the Social Drama

People conduct their lives as though their countless interactions with other people and with their world are intelligible, as though experiences carry or are filled with meaning. We say that our lives 'mean something'. Even though we do not know what the sum total of our lives means, we carry on convinced that it means something, that we are historically significant — even for our tiny circle of acquaintances.

In the many small experiences of our lives we believe that involvement with people and projects in our immediate environment is interesting and stimulating; that these experiences open up possibilities to know something novel, to learn new lessons, to develop new competencies, to get better at something, to expand ourselves beyond our present limitations. Often we seek the stimulation of artificially dramatic activity, like playing bridge or tennis, dominoes or volleyball. We place ourselves in an artificial contest with others. Involvement in these games provides the experience of drama because in playing the game we are not sure how it will turn out. The final outcome depends on many small choices and moves, the immediate result of which is uncertain.

Several years ago I was walking along the streets of Sienna, only shortly after Italy's soccer team had been eliminated from the World Cup tournament. Many citizens of Sienna who had been listening to or watching the game on television were out on the street, discussing the game in minute detail. 'If only he had passed to the wing before the defense could react; if only the goalie had moved forward to cut off the angle; if only the

defense had not played so far forward; if only . . . if only. . . .' Spectators who know the fine points of the game understand the intrinsic drama of all the small moves and choices made in the game. In one sense, the final outcome is contained in each one of those moves. The significance of each move is seen, in retrospect, in its contribution to the final result. The final score pronounces judgment on the composite quality of a person's competence in the game.

This game, of course, is a ritual representation of our understanding of life. Choices are made, risks are taken, without full or even partial knowledge of the outcome. Should the parent choose this moment to discipline the child? Should a politician choose this or that theme to stress in the final speech of the campaign? Is this the time to change jobs? Everyday life is made up of choices among alternatives whose outcomes are sometimes unpredictable. We have a sense of how the world should work, and so we choose one course of action over another. We smile or cheer when things go as expected; we blush with embarrassment or bluster in chagrin when things turn out badly, just the way we do in games.

Much of everyday life is made up of habit and routine. Those habitual or routine activities carry little or no sense of drama, for the outcome is known ahead of time. Routine suppresses the sense of meaning, choice and drama in everyday life. What is routine for some, however, is not for others. The veteran police officer who has to write up the report of a minor auto accident on Main Street goes about asking questions and checking documents with relative dispatch. To a police officer on his or her first day of duty, however, such an event might seem quite dramatic, and provide a sharp sense of the importance of police work.

Sometimes drama intrudes on routine. An accountant in the midst of balancing the monthly expenses of the firm may find that his figures are off by fourteen dollars. Now the detective work begins. It might take a whole day to find out where the culprit was hiding, but after hours of tedious repetition, success! Drained by the effort, but flushed with the feeling of triumph, the accountant returns home to his family and announces his victory against the forces of disorder and chaos in the universe.

The advertising industry grounds its enterprise on this understanding of everyday life. Because we seek meaning in our lives, we are constantly examining the symbolic world we inhabit for clues and cues of meaningful choices. Advertising attempts to wed these symbolic meanings to a product so that we will be drawn to purchase the product and thereby purchase the symbolic meaning behind it. Such and such an automobile communicates an image of youth, athleticism, sex appeal; another model communicates a sense of old wealth, sophisticated aristocracy, upper class distance from the vulgar and the purely functional. Whether other meanings and values are ignored by such ways of doing business is never considered. Advertisers are not interested in the company's record for worker safety and job security, nor how they dispose of their waste products.

Psychologists help us understand some components of the drama of everyday life in their analysis of defense mechanisms. Relatively healthy people employ these mechanisms every day. Most people see themselves as occupying center stage in a drama that unfolds around them. They are constantly rationalizing why their choices are correct: they are doing what any reasonable person would do in this situation. They also project their insecurities and fears about themselves on to other people. 'If only others were not so self-centered, or so concerned with their own authority, or so insecure about their appearance, they would not be acting this way toward me.' People often create self-fulfilling prophecies. 'Men are interested in only one thing. There! Look at that! What did I tell you?' 'What can you expect from the union? See how they keep asking for more money without any consideration for the long-term health of the company.'

In other words we are constantly playing out the drama from scripts of our own creation, or scripts we have learned from our own environment. We assign roles to ourselves and to the antagonists in our lives. Depending on how much we need to control the supports for our own heroic role in the drama, we will restrict the roles and scripts of others, or we will restrict our interpretation of the actions of others to a limited number of stereotypical subliminal roles. 'What she really meant by that

compliment was a criticism of my lack of creativity, because she thinks she is the only one who can do the job right.'

In group activities we find other patterns of dramaturgy. In groups, people adopt various roles, that of rule-keeper, reconciler, controller, decision-maker, parliamentarian. These roles vary according to upbringing and circumstance. In Japan, for example, group behavior seems more controlled by subtle scripts of courtesy, respect, deference, sensitivity and understatement.

The drama is almost always taking place on many levels. In an exchange between two people, there is the surface level of the linguistic exchange. Standing above the exchange is the self as observer, or as audience. 'How am I coming across?' 'What's the hidden agenda here?' 'Am I wearing the right clothes, using the correct vocabulary, speaking in the right tone of voice?' In the exchange multiple messages are communicated concerning the status relationship between the parties. A black man speaking with a white man in the southern United States will pick up a variety of messages. A black audience observing the conversation will hear different messages than a white audience observing the same interchange. An anthropologist or sociologist observing the exchange would observe a different drama going on. Which is the real drama?

We carry on our own drama every day. The quality of that performance,when added to the quality of the performances of many other people, create a collective historical performance. We can contribute to a collective sense of community or to a collective enactment of class divisions. Sometimes we are conscious that we are part of a larger drama and we can intentionally act to enhance or to diminish that drama, through our individual performances with other people and through the political choices we make.

These reflections on the dramaturgy inherent in everyday life led me on another excursion, this time into that body of social theory that views social life as drama. This chapter reports on the discoveries of the excursion and offers further reflections on leadership viewed within the social drama.

The name most often associated with the dramaturgical perspective on social life is Erving Goffman. His best known

work, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, was among the earliest in a series of brilliant studies spanning a quarter of a century.[1] Much of the recent literature dealing with elements of dramaturgy in everyday life refers to Goffman as its inspiration, or as its point of departure. Nevertheless, there are earlier writers who have employed the dramaturgical perspective, most notably, the creative analysis of Evreinoff.[2] Indeed, one can find the seeds of this perspective (although seeds from a considerable variety of intellectual blossoms) in the works of Freud, Durkheim, Marx, Kierkegaard, and some of the American social philosophers such as Cooley, Pierce, James, Dewey and Mead. Anthropological literature is another source for uncovering dramaturgical elements in social life, as the works of Geertz, Schechner, and Turner, to mention a few, give ample evidence.[3] In the field of literature, Kenneth Burke stands out as the best known spokesperson for the dramatic perspective on human life. He coined the word 'dramatism', the use of terms derived from theater to analyze human action both in literature and everyday life.[4] Even from the school of critical theory, we find an application of the dramaturgical perspective in the work of Young and Welsh.[5] In short, the use of the dramaturgical perspective to analyze social life is not an obscure, arcane, satirical enterprise, an amusing hobby of observers of the social foibles and eccentricities of human beings; rather, it is a broadly based and serious attempt to understand the dynamics of human social life.

In summary, what does this literature reveal about social life? It may be said that physics, chemistry and biology reveal the patterns and dynamisms in nature of which we are not immediately aware; those sciences serve as tools for understanding. So too, the sociological and social psychological examinations of everyday social life by means of terms and concepts from dramatic and theatrical productions reveal patterns and dynamisms of which we are not immediately conscious. Yet once these patterns and dynamisms are described and explained, we readily nod our head in amused agreement, because we recognize what was tacitly present in our own experience, but which we had not taken the time to look at closely.

The question arises, however, of whether we are dealing with a metaphorical explanation of social life, namely, that

social life is *like* a dramatic production, or whether we are dealing with an homology between the life of the stage and everyday life. In other words, is the dramaturgical explanation of social life an ontology of social life, or more simply a perspective on social life? Brissett and Edgley provide a good overview of various positions on this question, and come down on the side of metaphor (as does Goffman himself).[6] Nonetheless, one might ask the question differently: Are there aspects of everyday life which are intrinsically dramatic, which provide the material for the art form we name as 'a drama' or 'a play'? From that perspective, one might see a different line of argument:

- social life itself is dramatic;
- artists take this dramatic material and shape it by means of a staged performance which uses a variety of artifices to heighten and intensify the dramatic element, to bring out an underlying meaning from the dramatic material;
- subsequently, scholarly analysis of such theatrical performances provide terminology such as plot, scene, staging, script, atmosphere, etc., by which such performances may be examined and evaluated;
- subsequently social scientists happen upon such terminology and use it to examine and evaluate everyday life as reflecting dramatic or theatrical qualities.

Hence the circular nature of the phenomenon of dramaturgical analysis. The question turns out to be a chicken-and-egg question. One may say that the dramaturgical *theory* of social life is a metaphor, since all description, interpretation and explanation is based in metaphor, analogy and a set of assumptions about the world.[7] That is not to say, however, that social life is not dramatic. I tend to agree with Perinbanayagam who argues:

> The theater then is not something apart from society — or something that society invented to fulfill some purpose or other. Rather, it is a crystallization and typification of what goes on in society all the time — or more sharply, what a social relationship in fact is.[8]

To get down to specifics, let us now lay out some of the conclusions one arrives at from reading this literature on social life as dramaturgy.

- Social life tends to emphasize the expressive over the practical or moral.
- Individuals are involved in staging a performance.
- These performances embody a variety of communicative processes; performances are tied up with self-identity and self-esteem.
- Interactions are very protective of 'face'.
- Performances are influenced by differences in culturally grounded roles of class, gender, race, age and authority.
- Interactions are symbolic and are structured according to the symbolic syntax and semantics and contexts in which they are communicated.
- Settings usually influence performance, and are a part of the symbolic context.
- Culture provides the 'rough draft' of the performance.

Social Life as Expressive

From a dramaturgical perspective, social interaction tends to be viewed as predominantly expressive. The action in which actors are involved tends to be communicative action, where one person communicates something considered to be important or relevant to the other. Even where one is involved in seemingly practical activities in a social setting, the product of the action is seen as expressive of the talent and self-identity of the agent. Thus, when cooking a meal, the cook usually adds something to the recipe which makes the dish uniquely his or hers; when designing a house, the architect or the builder wants to make a personal statement; a legislator, in sponsoring a bill to protect the environment, wants to express personal concern to the constituents; even in fighting a war, soldiers want as much to express their courage, tenacity, love for their buddies, and to send a message to the enemy concerning their indomitable will, as they want to conduct the gruesome task of killing the enemy.

Performers Communicating with Other Performers

As an expressive performer, the actor wishes to communicate with another or with a group of others. The actor wants to communicate something about himself, about his achievements, about his abilities, about his widely varied experience, about his urbanity and sophistication, sometimes even about his interest in the other person. In order to do this, the actor frequently has to adopt the role or perspective of the other person. What choice of vocabulary will carry the message best? What references to the other's probable experiences would serve as examples for his message? What allusions to people whom the other might consider credible authorities would add weight to his message? In conveying the message, the actor chooses words and imagery which he thinks will make an impression on the other. In the process of conveying the message, the actor watches the other carefully for cues as to whether his message is getting across and whether the other is suitably impressed. Signs of confusion or doubt in the other's face or tone of voice will cause the actor to shift his message: 'What I mean is . . .' or 'Let me put it another way . . .' When the other sends confirming signals (nodding the head, pursing the lips, smiling, a chuckle, a 'Yes, that reminds me of a similar incident I had . . .') that he has gotten the actor's message, then the communicative episode is relatively complete. However, the performance may carry on for several episodes more, immediately or on successive days, or indefinitely, if, for example, the two parties travel to work on the same train everyday.

Status and Face

In such communications, it is important for both people to know what the status relationship between them is. Is one better educated, wealthier, higher in the hierarchy of the firm; or a more or less equal, from the same neighborhood and socio-economic background; or younger and far less experienced in the line of work they both occupy? The stance toward each other will vary, depending on these status variables. Often the

stuff of comedy comes out of situations where one actor has obviously made a mistake about the status relationship between the two.

Being sensitive to the other person's background in order to facilitate communication is only part of the communicative problem. In social situations, saving face is a very subtle process. There are many types of cue lines used to save one's own face: 'Oops, I goofed on that one!' 'Sorry, I missed the boat on that one.' 'I'm terribly sorry I'm late, the bus got caught in a terrible tie-up'. But the saving of the other person's face is just as important. Hence we use all kinds of tactful responses to cover up a blunder, or a lapse of propriety, sometimes pretending not to have noticed at all, sometimes blaming oneself for having caused a misunderstanding, sometimes telling a funny story about something like that happening to oneself. In some instances, when faced with a boring conversation, the actor will continue to show signs of interest, while in his mind he is planning his escape. The trick is to make a getaway without leaving the other party aware of how uninterested the actor is. There seems to exist an inherent compassion in people for the person who has committed some inept lapse in social intercourse, even though that compassion may turn to derision in private when among a close circle of friends. Yet the courtesy and tact with which we normally treat these lapses seems to confirm that the exercise is primarily an expressive one rather than a practical one, and that the self-esteem of the inept expressor must be kept intact.

Introductory rituals are often indicators of status relationships. Hence when A is introducing B to C, A will usually express enough information in his introduction of B so that C will know what sort of stance to take toward B. For example, C's opening remarks to B would be quite different depending on whether B were introduced as 'This is George Featherfoot, the president of Westview Bank and Trust' (the silent message being, 'the new bank we have just begun to borrow money from'), or as 'This is Walter Smathers, the new member of the grounds crew.' However, if Walter Smathers were the son of the president of the new bank they had just begun to borrow money from, and A did not tell C that, C could easily get the

firm in trouble by some offhand comment that would get back to Daddy.

Roles

Performances are very much influenced by culturally grounded gender and class roles. In some societies women are expected to keep silent in certain situations, letting the men do all the talking, or in other situations, the man keeps silent while the woman does all the talking. In India the caste system prohibits upper caste persons from communication with lower caste persons. In most class-differentiated societies, the language of working-class people differs enough from upper-class people, such that, were a working-class person to use upper-class vocabulary, that person would be derided by working-class peers for 'putting on airs'.

Symbols

From all of the above, it is apparent that the dramaturgical perspective on social life points out again and again how important symbols are, whether those symbols are words, literary allusions, gestures, bodily posture, clothing, name dropping, artifacts associated with oneself, etc. The appropriate use of symbols reveals what one thinks of oneself and what one thinks of the other. Almost anything in the setting can be used to communicate symbolically: the way one sits in a chair, the way one holds a glass, the way one leans against a wall. The setting itself, insofar as one has control over it, is a symbol of oneself, or of one's program. The artifacts present and not present, the arrangement of the furniture, the lighting, what kind of background music is playing, the positioning of functional objects such as a desk or a wet bar — all communicate an impression of who the host is, what are appropriate topics of conversation, and what the status relationship is.

Culture as the Rough Draft

One might say, adapting the words of Kenneth Burke, that culture provides the rough draft for the performance.[9] Through

the socialization process, humans come to master language and gesture appropriate to a variety of situations. Not only the parents but all the people one encounters teach us how to behave or not to behave in public. In school, in family gatherings, on the street, in the tavern, one acquires a knowledge of what the culture considers valuable or worthless, appropriate or inappropriate, funny or tragic, successful or unsuccessful. As one encounters various situations, one calls upon the cultural understandings one has internalized, what Mead called the 'generalized other', and improvises on the generalized scripts which the culture has written for various situations.[10] What this suggests is that the culture provides a sense of structure to the world as one experiences it. Through a variety of symbols, one recognizes what a specific situation is considered by the culture, and what actions are appropriate to that situation. Every situation is partly unique, however, as is every actor in the situation, and hence there is no exact script written that applies to every generic situation. Hence each performance is guided by the culture which provides a kind of rough draft for action, but each actor has to compose his or her own response to the situation according to the particular and unique chemistry of the time, place and personalities involved.

G.H. Mead offers a brilliant analysis of how a person functions improvisationally in a social setting, in his analogy of the game and the player:

> Each one of his [sic] own acts is determined by his assumptions of the action of the others who are playing the game. What he does is controlled by his being everyone else on that team, at least as far as those attitudes affect his own particular response.[11]

As an accomplished soccer, basketball or hockey player is moving toward the goal, he knows, without looking, where everyone is and can anticipate where they will be when the pass arrives, so, too, an accomplished social performer will quickly ascertain the dynamics of a situation and know how to move and speak so as to score the necessary points, pass the ball to someone else moving in for a score, block the shot of the

opposition, and so forth. The ability to sense and anticipate the feelings and attitudes of others in a situation, of course, is limited and fallible. One's reading of the culture's rough draft, and the expectation of how others are reading the same rough draft, can sometimes lead to very comical, or to very tragic mistakes. The mature social performer understands the fragility of social intercourse, due to easily misinterpreted cues. Hence the need to surround and support social communication with the formal conventions of courtesy and tact, and a kind of delicate understatement which allows for easy modification if it misses the mark.

Hence it becomes clear that although the culture provides a variety of interpretive symbolic clues as to how to carry off one's performance in a social setting, that structuring of our performance does not dictate the performance down to the last detail. As Perinbanayagam succinctly puts it,

> It seems then not only that there are structures in the language we use and the world we see and describe, but that we ourselves are doing the structuring, too. Structure is both noun and verb.[12]

A Closer Look at the Epistemology of Social Drama

One might probe deeper and ask how it is that the individual is both a genuine player in the social drama and at the same time is responsive to the situation-specific symbolic structures defined by the culture and to the chemistry of the time, place and personalities of the social encounter. In his elaboration of Mead's theory of social communication and the self, Perinbanayagam offers one of the more thorough analyses of the dialectic involved.[13] Like Mead, he intentionally avoids the extremes represented by the simplifications of voluntarism on the one hand, and of stimulus-response, behavioristic determinism on the other. He elaborates on Mead's distinction between the 'I' and the 'me' in the self. The self is socially shaped, or, more accurately perhaps, constituted. That is to say, from the vantage

point of social psychology, the self always exists in actual or imagined social relationships. There is no such thing as an isolated, subjective self, in the sense that the self is the exclusive source of thoughts, values, motives. Concepts, words, language and perceptions are all socially derived and learned, and called into use by actual or imagined social situations. Who I am as a 'self' — the person I call 'me' and the self others respond to — is shaped and constituted by all the social experiences I have ever had and am presently having. As Perinbanayagam puts it, '. . . the structure of the self reflects, or perhaps one should say is constituted by the structure of the symbolic systems with which it is implicated.'[14] This would seem to place the self in the deterministic predicament.

The self is also constituted as an 'I', however. The I is the source of choice in any given social encounter, even though that choice may be circumscribed by the particular social conditions of the moment. The I is that part of the self who recognizes the me, the self to whom others respond. The I chooses to remain that me, or to alter communicative acts so that others perceive a different me. It is not, however, as if the I is a totally independent agent who stands apart from the cultural definitions found in all social situations. The judgments the I makes are judgments formulated in the terms the culture has made available to the I. Nevertheless, the I is not a 'totally subservient distillate of the social process'.[15] There is always the possibility for free and spontaneous action. As Mead states it,

> The 'I' is the response of the organism to the attitudes of the others; the 'me' is the organized set of attitudes which one himself assumes. The attitude of the others constitute the 'me' and one reacts towards it as an 'I'.[16]

Hence we can understand that in the drama of social life, one is fashioned by the culture and by one's relationships with others. Yet at the same time, one is also actively engaged with the culture and with fashioning relationships. One internalizes the culture and the generalized other to which one is constantly responding as a me. Yet one improvises on both the cultural script and on the personal script which others seem to expect of the me.

In the drama of social life, the common and persistent problem each human faces is the engagement and participation in social acts. The problem is basically to define the situation and then to respond to it. This requires interpreting the symbols that are presented, coming up with a sense of the situation and of what it requires, and then engaging in responsive discourse with others. To participate in social communication is to become involved with other people, to risk making one's self public, available for another person to accept or reject. It is also to involve oneself with the self of the other person, to allow the reality of the other person to infringe on one's own world, to accept the tacit obligation to treat the other person with the courtesy and sensitivity which the other person requires. Although we gradually learn to carry off most social occasions with a sense of ease and confidence, underneath the surface, we are always engaged in risky business. Even mature persons who appear to have an enormous reservoir of self-esteem and self-confidence will find that reservoir quickly evaporating in the face of repeated rebuffs and humiliations in social encounters.

Hence Perinbanayagam's insistence that meaning in social encounters is a dialectic of signifying acts between two or more humans. That is to say, one engages the other by signifying something in word and gesture. That signifying word and gesture must be received by the other and a response from the other sent in the other's signifying word or gesture which indicates how the message was received. The meaning of what was attempted to be communicated is not complete until the receiver sends a responsive message indicating how the sender's message was received. In other words, meaning is intrinsically social; it is what happens *between* humans. Even when one is 'talking to oneself' the I is talking to the socially constituted me, or to an imaginary person. One gets the meaning only when the me or the imaginary person responds. As Perinbanayagam summarily states it;

> The significance of a gesture then is the basis on which one is prepared to respond, and the significance of the returning gesture completes the act and makes it a social and mutually meaningful act.[17]

As one gains experience in such communication, one builds up a stable repertoire of words, phrases, gestures, whole linguistic and symbolic systems which have a generalized public syntax and significance, and which one can employ to communicate and create meaning with others.

Two Meanings of the Term 'Drama'

It begins to become apparent how even the simplest beginnings of social relationships, then, embody drama. Here we must introduce an important distinction in the use of the terms 'drama' and 'dramatic'. Social communication is dramatic in one sense in that, in the very activity of communicating, one is attempting to share one's sense of oneself and one's sense of the world with another person, with an awareness that one does not know ahead of time where the communication will lead or what its outcome will be. It may be a relatively safe exchange, demanding very little of either party; it may lead to a deeper conversation extended over time that blossoms into friendship, or partnership in a commercial or civic endeavor; it may end in embarrassment and humiliation, in a snub or a brush-off. Even in relationships of many years, one does not know whether on any given social occasion the conversation may reveal something tragic, or hurtful, or unexpected which irretrievably alters the relationship. Social communication involves us in the *lives* of other people, and human lives are brimming with potential tragedy and comedy, horrors and miracles, beauty and blemishes, fears, terrors and laughter. To put two humans in a relationship contains multitudinous possibilities, and in these possibilities one finds the essence of drama.

We also use the terms drama and dramatic to refer to the *forms* of everyday social communication. This seems more to be what Goffman and Perinbanayagam focus on in their work, namely, the theatricality with which humans embody their words and gestures. This theatricality enables performers to conceal, distort, highlight and intensify their messages. Perinbanayagam seems to intend this sense of drama in his treatment of dramatic action:

> . . . dramaturgy is the method, the efficient, efficacious, and parsimonious method of articulating and experiencing [meaning]. . . . It is not that reality is theatrical or dramatic; rather, what is considered reality by society, or a part thereof, is theatrically realized and constructed.[18]

Ernest Becker has dealt with the first sense in which we speak of the drama of social life.[19] Drawing on the work of Freud, Adler, Reich, von Rank, Fromm and Lang, Becker outlines the socialization process from infancy to adulthood. His interpretation of the socialization of infants differs somewhat from Giddens, although they seem to highlight the similar themes of anxiety and trust. Two central motifs emerge from Becker's analysis of the socialization process: anxiety and alienation. The infant from its earliest moments experiences dependence upon the mother for nourishment, warmth and security. Part of the earliest socialization of the infant is learning to deal with the absence of the mother. Separation from the presence of the mother can be terrifying for the infant. At the same time, the infant comes to expect the mother to be there all the time, as though the infant were the sun around which the mother was perpetually in orbit. One of the painful experiences every child must go through is to learn that the mother is a separate individual who has other competing interests besides that of tending to the child's every whim.

Nonetheless, the child gains a sense of existential security from the relationship with the mother. When she is there, the child is fed, kept warm, caressed, cooed over, tickled, rubbed, bounced on the knee, sung to, hugged and kissed. Who would not feel wonderful with such attention? Yet the child learns also that mothers can withhold such attention, especially when the child has done something that displeases the mother. The child then, learns how to please the mother, and avoid displeasing her in order to continue to feel valued and loved. Losing the mother's love, praise and attention leaves the child literally with no human support. The feeling of almost total anxiety can be an experience that, once having occurred, burrows deep inside an child's unconscious, and impels the child to do all in its power to keep that relationship with the mother favorable. Whether one

experiences severe anxiety in infancy or more modest forms of it, anxiety in some form seems to be the common lot of most children and indeed of most adults. It is an anxiety of not knowing whether one is *loveable*, or even, that one is worthy of attention.

The experience of anxiety leads to the other embedded experience in human life, namely alienation. Being dependent upon the mother and subsequently upon other adults in one's environment, one learns how to suppress or overcome anxiety about one's acceptability by learning to do what will please other people and gain their praise. This involves the frequent suppression of following one's spontaneous impulses to eat, touch, excrete, flail about for the simple pleasure of bodily movement, in favor of doing what will please other people. As one gets older, one learns the more abstract rules or principles that are supposed to guide socially acceptable behavior. One becomes socialized by learning and putting into practice what other people and 'society' want and expect of one. The loss of spontaneity through the displacement of actions based on one's own preferences and impulses tends to lead the youngster more and more into getting his or her sense of self-esteem from what others want. Socialization, in other words, demands a displacement of oneself. This is a displacement of self-esteem based on who one is and what talents and skills one develops to please oneself in favor of self-esteem based on pleasing other people. The socialization process, in other words, induces alienation from oneself. To be social means not to be oneself, but to be and do what is socially acceptable to those who make up one's social environment. The socialization process is well advanced when the youngster can say to the parents, 'No need for you to punish me for misbehaving; I will punish myself.'

The question for the individual then becomes, 'How shall I fashion a world that sustains my self-esteem?' The answer, as Becker explains, is to create an action world with others from symbols and symbol systems that will sustain our self-esteem. Such a world is governed by symbols which will tell everyone what is right and wrong, acceptable or unacceptable, worthwhile or worthless. Social intercourse for such anxiety-prone and alienated humans must be surrounded and interpenetrated

with conventions, rituals, manners and courtesies, so that one can more easily read the cues of others, and respond accordingly.

The challenge for a mature person, of course, is to get himself or herself back again. Here the more recent autobiographical literature of women illustrates what a struggle the process of becoming one's own person can be. Becker, however, does not deny the legitimate claims of the community on the individual. One cannot go off on a private journey of self-discovery in a desert and act as though one can dispense with any and all social conventions and social obligations. The challenge is to find the satisfying blend of individual freedom within community participation.

Seen from the dramaturgical perspective, Becker raises the question of how one can continue to carry off a successful performance according to the conventions of the community and at the same time satisfy one's need to be oneself. For Becker, the answer begins with what he calls the remarkable achievement of the social sciences over the last two centuries, namely, the exposé of the socialization process itself. Now people can begin to understand the source of their anxiety and alienation. Opposing individual therapy after socialization has done its damage, Becker urges a more generalized education of adults about the sources of anxiety and alienation. Such an education would lead to an intentional change of the socialization process itself. Better to engage in wholesale prevention than in individual therapy for those who can afford it after the damage is done. In other words, Becker would urge that we intentionally take charge of the social drama, rather than leaving humans to continue repeating the mistakes of their own socialization.

To follow Becker's recommendations would take us too far afield at the moment. What is important for the present purposes is to recognize what is at stake in the social drama, or rather to realize why the social drama is drama at all. Social life is dramatic because it involves the most basic questions of identity and the moral pursuit of integrity. How is it that humans can be involved in a performance and yet realize themselves in that performance, when the whole thing is an artifact? That is the point, however. Being an artifact, something humans make, it is possible to assert some control over one's own artifact, to create

at least to some degree one's self, one's *persona*. The drama of the social drama is precisely in that challenge, namely, to create oneself, while at the same time being involved with others who are creating themselves, and to do so in such a way as to be simultaneously loyal to one's own dreams, responsible to other persons, and sensitive to the community setting which makes such individual creativity a communal experience. Such creations can be emancipatory or constricting. The drama of the social drama is embedded in the experience of this struggle.

Some General Observations on the Social Drama

We must attempt to pull together such a considerable literature so that we may begin to draw out implications for leadership. Some points need to be reiterated:

- Social life is *interactive*. We are involved with one another, whether we like it or not. We can manipulate the involvement, distort it, keep it at a distance, and thereby and of necessity, diminish the fuller expression and development of ourselves. Or we can participate more fully in the lives of others, inviting mutuality in our relationships, risking the fragile construction of our own self-esteem, and at the same time encouraging others to enter into their performance with greater candor and integrity. While on the one hand we recognize how the culture already provides the rough draft of our scripts, we cannot continuously engage passively in the stock response. The drama requires us to be active, to bring the voice of the I more to the forestage from its place of hiding behind costume and scenery.
- The social drama is what we have created. Having created it, we can allow it to force conformity to its structures, even against our own best interests, or we can intentionally reshape it and continuously recreate it to make it work on our behalf. We are collectively responsible for the social drama as it is, for better or worse. We can assume responsibility for it by entering

into it more heuristically, naming artifacts of the drama which inhibit a more wholesome participation of ourselves and other people, improvising what seem to be more genuine expressions of ourselves.

- Social life is dramatic in that it contains the drama of establishing, shaping, defending and altering our very identities. If we have any sense of ourselves we have it in the everyday dramas of our relationships and our decisions to act. Who we are as individuals and as a community is at stake in social life. We become a somebody or a nobody through our everyday actions with people. We may act with Mediterranean theatricality or with Nordic understatement, but the stakes are the same. What do we want to do with our lives? Do we seek some heroic ideal, or the anonymity of unobtrusive mediocrity; the narcissism of self-absorbed consumption, or the risky business of sharing our life and our self with others? We give our answers in our everyday choices and relationships.
- Life slips away from us in triviality or it takes form and substance through involvement in something larger than ourselves. Occasionally the choices seem obviously courageous, transforming, life-altering, but most of the time they are small choices, undistinguished in their ordinariness, unpretentious in their practicality, modest in their reach, often ambiguous in their intent, but cumulatively they add up to a life sustained by a clear sense of what human dignity and integrity, loyalty and responsibility involve. All of those choices, the great ones and the small, contain the stuff of drama.

Implications for Leadership

For those who would be leaders, the understanding of the drama of social life has many implications. One of those is that leaders should have a sense of the dramatic in their lives. That dramatic sense grows out of an awareness of involvement with other people, with their lives. Their collective actions make a difference,

certainly to the members of the organization who, through their collective involvement find or fail to find meaning and fulfillment, and a difference to the client community on whom their collective action is focused. Whether in major or in minor ways, the leaders and their communities make a difference in the world. They make history. The leader's dramatic sense is an historical sense — not simply an awareness of the past history of the group, but an awareness that history is *now* and they are implicated in it.

Seen from the dramaturgical perspective leaders should have a sense of what the drama is. That is to say, they will be able to name it and thereby give it greater intelligibility. Hence, besides being aware *that* their work is dramatic, leaders will frequently talk about *what* that drama is, what it involves, how people in that drama would be playing their parts. From the considerations of the previous chapter, it should be obvious that the naming of the drama would place it in a postmodern context. Furthermore, the leader would understand that despite the commercial, political or technological ends which are being served by the drama, the drama is a human construct, made by humans to serve human purposes. While serving other legitimate purposes, the drama can never subordinate the rights and responsibilities of human beings. While serving individual interests, the drama can never displace its obligation to serve the human community as well. That human community is poorly served when it is defined and treated only and exclusively as a collection of self-interested, isolated individuals.

Leaders should have a sense of responsibility for the drama. This does not mean that the leader can take responsibility for every detail of the drama. The details of the drama are the responsibility of all of those who have parts to play in the drama, but leaders especially will want to see that the drama is working well. They cannot walk away from a disfunctional organization with the excuse that it is someone else's responsibility. On the contrary, they will feel a great sense of responsibility to call the members of the cast together to discuss how to make the drama work better.

With that sense of responsibility would be added a sense of how the drama is supposed to work. Hence leaders would know their organizations well, the various scripts, stage props, curtain

cues, entry lines, procedures for prompting and strategic moments in the flow of the dramatic action. If leaders were to encourage the ongoing shaping of the drama, then they should be able to take the play apart and put it together again. That ability implies quick familiarity with the script and the players and the technologies of production. It also implies a well-considered set of human values, a clear sense of what constitutes human fulfillment (community, autonomy, creativity, love, pride in achievement, close relationships, etc.). Because of their strategic position in the social drama, they can mobilize the participants to restore the drama to its human purposes.

Other implications for the dramaturgical perspective for leadership will be developed in the following chapter. For now, the ground seems to have been sufficiently laid for accepting the legitimacy of viewing leadership from this perspective. In the next chapter, we will begin to see how the drama of organizational life gets played out as leaders function as players, directors, stage managers and critics.

Notes

1 Goffman, E. (1959) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, New York, Doubleday Anchor Books. For a good summary of Goffman's contribution see the introductory essay in Brissett, D. and Edgley, C. (Eds) (1990) *Life as Theater*, 2nd ed., New York, Aldine de Gruyter.

2 Evreinoff, N. (1927) *The Theatre in Life*, edited and translated by A. Nazaroff, New York, Benjamin Blom, Inc.

3 Geertz, C. (1971) *Myth, Symbol, and Culture*, New York, Basic Books; Schechner, R. (1988) *Performance Theory*, New York, Routledge; Turner, V. (1974) *Drama, Fields and Metaphors; Symbolic Action in Human Society*, Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press.

4 Burke, K. (1969) *A Grammar of Motives*, Berkeley, CA, University of California Press.

5 Young, T.R. and Welsh, J. (1984) *Critical Dimensions in Dramaturgical Analysis*, Lubbock, TX, Red Feather.

6 Brissett and Edgley (1990) pp. 30–36.

7 Brissett and Edgley (1990) p. 35.

8 Perinbanayagam, R.S. (1985) *Signifying Acts: Structure and Meaning in Everyday Life*, Carbondale, IL, Southern Illinois University Press, p. 63.

9 Burke, K. (1964) 'Art . . . and the First Rough Draft of Living', *Modern Age*, **12**, Spring, pp. 155–65.

10 Mead, G.H. (1934) *Mind, Self, and Society*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, p. 155.
11 Mead (1934) p. 154.
12 Perinbanayagam (1985) p. 75.
13 Perinbanayagam (1985).
14 Perinbanayagam (1985) p. 88.
15 Perinbanayagam (1985) p. 89.
16 Mead (1934) p. 175.
17 Perinbanayagam (1985) pp. 8–9.
18 Perinbanayagam (1985) p. 63.
19 Becker, E. (1968) *The Structure of Evil*, New York, The Free Press; Becker, E. (1970) *The Birth and Death of Meaning*, 2nd ed., New York, The Free Press.

Chapter 7

The Drama of Leadership

The intuition motivating these excursions into social theory was that the research, theory and teaching of leadership had fallen behind advances in social theory. Despite the advances in the literature on leadership, I felt we had still many landscapes to explore. During each excursion I found many new insights into the phenomenon of leadership. As my journeys continued, moreover, I began to discern a theme running throughout them, namely the theme of drama. Not only was I encountering dramaturgical terminology such as role and script, plot and play, but I was also perceiving a dynamic agency where the stakes were high, where the outcome was uncertain, where there were underlying struggles over human values. In the duality of agency and structure, in charismatic invention, in dramas of domination, I was seeing the human comedy and tragedy unfold. The excursion into postmodern literature only served to confirm this conviction. It remained to study the theories on social life as drama in order to deepen my understanding and gain greater facility with dramaturgical language. Although the preceding chapters have attempted to draw out implications for leadership from each of the perspectives under study, there seems now the possibility of a synthesis. This chapter attempts to describe the drama of leadership.

Before moving to that task, however, I want to offer an observation to my colleagues from whom I have learned so much. As I moved through these relatively unfamiliar landscapes of social theory. I never encountered any attention to

my chief concern, namely, the phenomenon of leadership. The social theories of Giddens, Garfinkel, Mead and Habermas tend to describe ordinary people in ordinary, everyday life — not extraordinary people on extraordinary days in extraordinary periods of life. One problem with social analysis of everyday life is that it tends to concentrate its focus on the ordinary patterns of everyday life. Thus focused, the audience appears to identify the present forms of everyday life with the only possibilities of human action. Yet the fact that the vast majority of people go about the everyday routines of reproducing the social context in much the same way as they find it, does not mean that that is all people are capable of. Introducing leadership considerations into this picture of everyday life indicates that there are other possibilities of action, not simply for the very few but for the very many. In other words, the question arises whether there is an ideological assumption behind the sociological analyses of everyday life, namely an anthropology of the lowest common denominator, or, to employ an less charitable appellation, an anthropology of mediocrity. Whatever we designate that view of human being, does it not bias the theory and the research of everyday life against evidence of a more heroic side to human beings?

The Larger Challenge of Leadership

In any event, we are at the point were we can begin to ask whether these excursions into social theory have generated the rewards we anticipated at the start. I believe that they have. Leadership appears now to involve challenges of dramatic proportions. It appears legitimate to speak of the drama of leadership, both in the sense that leadership involves dramaturgical expressive elements, and also in the sense that the exercise of leadership, both in the present and well into the foreseeable future, involves us in a drama that the postmodern world is not sure it wants to embrace. That is to say, at this moment in history, the energy, enthusiasm and will for national and institutional renewal in all sectors of society may have diminished to the point where the gradual decline towards mediocrity and

the definition of social and civic life in narrow, self-serving frameworks appears irreversible. The stakes, therefore, are high; the outcome is uncertain; the effort required will be heroic. Hence the quality of the social drama hinges very much on the drama of leadership; will it rise to the challenge?

Leadership Within Postmodern Sensibilities

Leadership in the postmodern world is desperately needed. It must be a new kind of leadership, however, a leadership grounded in the sober understandings and memories gained at such a cost in human lives and suffering. We need a leadership, therefore, able to critique the shortcomings, and the myths that support, the *status quo*. It has to be a leadership grounded in a new anthropology, an understanding of the human condition as both feminine and masculine, as multicultural, as both crazy and heroic, violent and saintly, and as embedded in and therefore responsible to nature. We are talking of a leadership broadly based throughout society, rather than a leadership exercised by a select few. Only when the majority of the people are willing to take responsibility for public life, willing to bear the burden of leadership in their own local conditions, can postmodern societies renew themselves.

For such broadly based leadership to develop, there will be a need for other leaders who will attend to the development of a critical mass of leadership in the population at large. This raises additional questions. Who will these teachers of the new generations of leaders be? Will they be intellectuals from universities? Will they be practitioners from a wide variety of fields? Who will choose them and according to what criteria? One danger, of course, is that the teachers of the new leadership will still be speaking from within a modern world view. Where will these teachers of the new leadership be found? At present there are but a few centers, such as Virginia's University of Richmond's newly established undergraduate program, or the Center for Creative Leadership in Greensboro, North Carolina which deals more with established executive practitioners. Many additional centers, offering diverse programs, serving diverse

groups, in diverse locations (inner-city community centers, corporate centers, universities, union halls, regional centers affiliated with national organizations such as The League of Women Voters, The Urban League, etc., to suggest a few), need to be established. The next chapter will take up specific content which might be included in such educational programs.

Institutional Renewal Through Education

This new kind of leadership must emerge in institutional settings, for the task of societal renewal will come about mainly through institutional renewal. The renewal of institutions will call for a grounding of the instrumental rationality of the institution in more substantive rationality. Institutional purposes and procedures will need to be grounded in the service of human values and the common good of both constituents and clients. Much of this renewal will take the form of education, not so much in a top-down didacticism, but rather in ongoing exploratory discussions among members of the organization about the practical questions and consequences of their work-lives, and of the myths and assumptions which those involve.

In this educational process, leaders will need to attend particularly to the mythic content of the organizational culture and subcultures within it. As Eisenstadt and Shills suggest, institutional participation must be nurtured by the sacred core or center of values for which the institution stands. Gaining some understanding of the tacit, yet very influential myths and beliefs that structure the everyday lives of people in the organization should lead to therapeutic benefits of more reflective practice, greater attention to ideal speech conditions, mutual understanding among stakeholders, increased motivation and greater commitment to the moral tasks of the institution. It should also lead to restructuring the institution better to serve these moral tasks while at the same time serving the technical, commercial or political tasks of the institution.

Leaders will understand in this process of education that their power does not come from the force of their personalities, but from the power of values that ground human life as

meaningful and worthwhile. This process of education enables the leader to be energized by these core values and to encourage the constituents to drink frequently from this same well of values.

We have heard phrases like 'the self-educating organization' used to describe those institutions which successfully restructured to meet emerging needs of their clients. That phrase takes on deeper significance when we realize how thoroughgoing a self-education is called for. Leaders will be the primary movers in creating and sustaining this self-educating renewal of the postmodern institution.

The Leader as Player

Leaders serve a variety of functions in the drama: as players, directors, stage managers and critics. Leaders must be players within the drama. The cast needs to have a sense of the leader's involvement in the action. Leaders have to feel the anxiety of not knowing how things will work out, the excitement of the action, the ambiguities and conflicts in relationships, the struggle to meet deadlines and the satisfaction of a completed performance. As a player, the leader must become, as it were, all the other players in the game, as Mead suggested. The leader must know the moves and the moods of the other players in order to know when to pass the ball, take a shot, call time-out. If leaders are not involved as players, they lose their credibility with the other players. Involvement as a player also implies that leaders recognize the integrity of other players' parts and allow the space for their performance, often ceding them center stage.

Often leaders are described as people who stand above, and must *necessarily* stand above the activity of everyday institutional life. It is true that leaders need to gain psychological distance (and that frequently means physical distance as well) from the everyday activities of the institution in order to develop perspective. Nevertheless, it is only as a player that they are able to recognize that their own integrity is at stake in the collective moral life of the organization. In other words, leadership is more than technical virtuosity; it is moral activity as well. Leadership

, implies a covenanted relationship with members of the organizational community. This implication does not mean that leaders cannot move to other institutions. It does mean, however, that leaders take responsibility for their relationships with the people in the organization while they are there. They are *inside* the drama, therefore, not sitting in the audience. By taking responsibility for the drama, the leader models the kind of responsibility the other members are expected to take. This is the kind of responsibility Chester Barnard celebrated in his analysis of the executive's moral commitment to the organization's central values.[1]

The Leader as Director

Leaders must function not only as players but also as directors. This places two obligations on the leader. First the leader must have a large sense of the drama being played, so that individual scenes and acts are integrated into a meaningful unity of purpose. As a director, he or she is an educator, taking people through various rehearsals until they are ready to carry on the performance automatically, having internalized the overarching human theme or themes which the play as a whole expresses. In those rehearsals, the director encourages a certain amount of improvisation and personalizing of the role, relying on the actors' own sense of integrity, creativity and intelligence to carry the drama to a humanly fulfilling conclusion. This situation involves the second obligation of the director/leader, namely, the need to balance control and guidance with freedom and responsibility. He or she does this by referring continually to the meaning and purpose of the drama itself, while encouraging the players to express the drama in their own terms. The director's job is eventually to become unnecessary, to turn the show over to the actors. Hence leadership in this sense is *empowering*; it is the ability to admit and even to celebrate that others have the ability and the skills to carry on the job with excellence in the absence of the leader. When that happens, the members become self-directing.

The Leader as Stage Manager

When the play has gone through rehearsal and fine tuning, the director usually leaves the managing of the daily performance in the hand of the stage manager. The stage manager, working with the director during the rehearsal stages, has a detailed understanding of the flow of the action, when lights are dimmed or raised, when scenery is moved, when curtains are raised and lowered, when actors are cued to enter the stage. The stage manager takes over from the director for the actual performance. The director may do some fine-tuning after the first few performances, but basically the day-to-day operation of the performance is managed by the stage manager. There may be times when the director's further involvement is necessary, for example, if the stage manager decides to experiment with one or more variables such as the sound, the lighting or positions of the actors on the stage. A director may have to intervene, in another instance, when a crisis among the cast occurs. Ordinarily, however, the director does not do the work of the stage manager.

In many organizations, some leaders like the detailed work of stage managing, of sitting in the control room with communications links to every team involved in the production. The line between managing day-to-day operations and leadership is often very fluid. Leadership is exercised at both levels. Often the stage manager will come up with successful improvisations on the stage directions which the director had not thought of. Depending on the type and size of the organization, one will find greater separation between the roles of directors and stage managers: in some the roles will be collapsed into one person; in others, there may be layers of administration between the director and the persons responsible for the day-to-day management of operations. The point here is simply that both roles require leadership within the social drama.

The Leader as Critic

Leaders also function as critics. In order to function as a critic, the leader must be able to reflect on the performance, to gain

a clear impression of the effect of the whole, and to be able to judge how the individual acts, scenes and performances contributed to or detracted from that sense of the whole. Both critic and director require a deep understanding of the play. The director exercises that understanding in the preparation of the play. The stage manager normally directs the everyday performance of the play. The critic produces an evaluation of the play after it has beeen performed. Leaders will take the time to critique the company's performance.

Although the role of the critic is often thought of as making negative judgments about various blemishes in the performance, critics also call attention to outstanding features of the performance. Hence, the leader-critic will seek to highlight the good performances of the cast, the fine work of the support personnel who contribute to the staging, lighting, costuming, publicity, etc., and reiterate the relationship of the performance to the themes which the play was meant to express.

There will be occasions, as well, when the leader-critic must name those elements of the drama which do not serve genuinely human purposes. As a good critic, the leader will explain why those elements are destructive, and propose alterations in the institutional life which better express the human values central to the institutional drama. One of the major challenges to leadership is to confront the shortsightedness of the all-pervasive instrumental rationality of institutional life. Habermas' suggestion about creating the conditions of ideal speech within the institution seems to offer one suggestion for infusing discourse about more substantive and practical human concerns into the decision-making processes. On the other hand, there are no easily available substantive recommendations to offer. Institutions vary considerably, and within the same institution, what should be done today might be counterproductive next month. Each institutional community will have to discover, through discourse and argument what seems best under the present circumstances. Opening up institutional discussions to criticism of attitudes, practices, assumptions and myths within the institution should of itself be therapeutic.

Criticism involves reminding the actors about their responsibility in the drama, calling them away from upstaging

one another, challenging self-serving rationalizations, naming institutional structures of domination. Criticism means reminding the members of the fragility of the human drama in which they are involved, and hence the need for humility and compassion in the face of imperfect achievement.

The Scripts of Leadership

Leaders need to examine the various scripts they are handed by a variety of groups. The board of directors have one script. The unions have a rather different one. The personnel department and government regulating agencies offer yet other scripts. The language of scripts tend to define the institution in fixed, a priori categories. They assume a world view, bolstered by assumptions and mythologies. The language of scripts sets a direction and carries values of which we are seldom aware. One script speaks of bureaucratic functions of control and coordination; another speaks in accounting terms; another in political categories. Several of these scripts contradict one another, and reflect unresolvable tensions of institutional life. That is to say, leaders must recognize that institutions are not like mechanisms which function according to a single set of principles; they are made up of various constituencies which pursue at least partly opposing purposes. One task of leadership is to prevent these centrifugal forces from tearing the institution apart. The key seems to be to gain the players' collective cooperation through commitment to some larger purpose, while at the same time meeting their legitimate individual technical and professional needs.

Leaders need to reflect on the scripts that are currently available. They need to critique their shortcomings, look for usable language and imagery, and fashion a new script which offers a vision of greatness. That vision must express a new anthropology and a postmodern sensibility, as well as a view of what a restructured institution might look like. That new script must also enable the leader to express his or her own integrity as a player in the drama, and invite the members to take responsibility for their integrity as players in the drama. A quality of the

new script is that it will remain unfinished, not only for the leader, but for the whole institution. There must be an understanding that improvisation upon institutional scripts will be expected; that room for moral autonomy and responsibility to one's ideals will be respected. Hence the leader must call for creativity, for discussion, for compromise and consensus, and when called for, a thorough rewriting of the script itself. If we are going to have a genuine drama, then we must have players who have a genuine stake in the drama, and that only happens when they are able to participate in discussions about policies that affect them, when they can find a sense of personal and collective fulfillment in their performance and when they have a sense that what they are doing is humanly significant.

The Play Beyond the Play

Beyond the drama that the leader is directing, there is a larger play, or a multiplicity of other plays occurring. In many instances, these dramas intersect, as when a company is audited by the Internal Revenue Service, or regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency, or interfaces with a major corporation which purchases its products or supplies its raw materials. A company may import or export goods from an overseas country; one country's foreign service may interact with another country's; a teaching hospital will interface with a university medical school. Intersection and overlapping among dramas is a fact of institutional life, and a reality that will occupy some of the leader's time.

I am referring here, however, primarily to the larger societal play going on. In the larger societal play there are issues such as women's rights, environmental safety, energy conservation; issues concerning employment of the handicapped and senior citizens, community building and community improvement projects; issues over housing for the homeless and special programs for homeless children, public safety and quality of life in the community.

All institutions have responsibilities to the communities and regions where they are located. Besides their responsibility to

model human values in their internal affairs, institutions have a responsibility to express concern for the benefit of the community at large. Not only does the local community supply workers for institutions, but the local community is one of the major clients of the local institution, whether that institution be a hospital, a university, a manufacturing firm, or a public service agency. Institutions serve the larger community first by turning out a quality product or service, but they also need to play a part in the general welfare of that community. Sometimes that will mean developing energy-conserving technologies; sometimes it will mean setting an industry-wide standard in a model health care plan; sometimes it will involve outreach educational programs for unemployed youth; sometimes it will involve sponsoring cultural activities which otherwise the community may not be able to afford. There is no uniform formula for institutions to follow in this regard. Leaders, however, must recognize that they are players not only in the drama of the institution, but in the larger drama of society. Their participation as players should involve not only their participation as private citizens, but their involvement of the institution as a corporate player in the social drama.

The Importance of Vision

In highlighting the leaders' roles as director, player and critic, in discussing the need to write a leadership script, and to incorporate one's institutional leadership within a sense of the larger social drama, I am struck by how critical to all of this is the leader's vision. As we saw in chapter 3, leaders need to be grounded in some core meanings which are central to human life. Those core meanings may include courage and loyalty, freedom and individual rights, the sacredness of the law, the practice of healing, or simply the ideal of excellence. The leader sees the profound relationship of those core meanings to their expression in institutional form, such that they shape the sensibilities, motives and actions of the members of the institution. Furthermore, based on those core meanings, leaders shape the future of their institutions in directions which further embody those

meanings. The vision of what the institution can become or is becoming then becomes translated into more specific goals, priorities, agendas, timetables for action. It is that vision of greatness which Burns seems to be talking about when he describes how transformational leaders motivate and energize their followers to integrate their individual needs and goals into the larger view of where they might go in a united, collective action.

The vision is always out in front of the leader, in one sense. It calls forth the leader's and the members' best efforts. In another sense, it is sometimes embodied in the extraordinary achievements of member of the institution. The leader's vision is what motivates him or her to be a genuine player in the drama and is a call to greatness as well. The leader's vision is likewise what enables him or her to articulate the major themes of the drama in the role as director. The vision enables the leader/director to see the unity within the various scenes and subplots in the drama, and to call the various actors to express, in their own parts those overarching themes. Having that vision enables the leader as critic to praise an exemplary performance, as well as to call the company's attention to how far short of the ideal performance they are. The vision becomes the overarching script for the leader. Although it will be necessary to incorporate various elements of the bureaucratic, political, professional and technical scripts, the leader's vision is what unifies it into a coherent script. Finally, it is the leader's vision which allows him or her to play a significant part in the larger social drama, and to call the institution to its responsible part in that drama.

Where does the vision for the present-day leader come from? Obviously it will have many sources, from one's parents and influential persons in one's early years; from lessons learned in painful and successful experiences throughout one's life; from one's education, religious tradition and socialization. The vision must also accommodate the postmodern realities and the new anthropology. That is to say, the vision must reflect both feminine and masculine perspectives, multicultural influences, environmental concerns, and the accounting of the darker as well as the heroic side of human nature. It must also include a view of human fulfillment that places being over having, making over

consuming, preserving over exploiting, relating over competing. This does not mean a kind of monastic dispensing with having, consuming, exploiting or competing; rather, the vision has a sense of priorities of one over the other.

The Tension Between Ordinary Life and Leadership

Most reasonable people would ask at this point, 'When do these new leaders of yours get a chance to take a day off, to go to a ball game or a concert?' Ordinary life tends to flow much more slowly, to have more time for conversations on the front porch or around a campfire. Ordinary people have routines at work that enable them to work at a relaxed pace, with mental energy expenditure at half speed. The job gets done without too much fuss, except for those occasions when we are behind on a deadline. The drama of leadership seems to call for much more focused work, more sustained intensity, full attention to the multiform demands and challenges of the work. Is this kind of leadership possible with ordinary people? Should we not return to Mr. Giddens' more balanced, and more realistic duality of structure, where people more or less reproduce the circumstances in which they find themselves?

Certainly, Giddens' analysis indicates the enormous weight of routines which channel action so regularly that they almost define reality. Structures tend to prevent even the possibility of thinking of alternative ways to act, especially as they are intertwined with structures of other social systems into a mutually reinforcing matrix of institutions. Nevertheless, following Giddens, the leader knows that it is people who make these structures, and that people can modify them or refashion new ones. The very intimidating impression of the solidity, strength and complexity of modern institutions reveals, paradoxically, the enormous talent and creativity humans possess to fashion and maintain such social leviathans through collective will and intelligence. We make them and then, unfortunately, grow afraid of them. Sometimes that fear inspires worship.

On the other hand, we did not make them in a day and we shall not remake them in a day. The work of institutional renewal is, in a sense, a never-ending task. That is precisely Giddens' point, however. We reproduce our institutions every day. In the process of reproducing them, we should, every day, be improving them. Those institutions exist only in and through our collective action.

It is not as though everyday life is that different from the collective tasks of institution building. Every day we collectively reproduce our institutions and the complex matrix of interdependent structures which hold them together internally and across institutional and societal boundaries. Every day we arise from sleep to carry on the social drama. What the postmodern sensibility and the new anthropology add to that everyday fashioning of the social drama is the challenge to refashion it, little by little, using the talents and energies we use every day in sustaining a drama that does not work for a lot of people, to make it work better.

Having time for conversations on the front porch or around the campfire, conversations at the beach or at the pub should be part of the postmodern drama as well. But perhaps the conversations will be about different concerns — not so much how to defeat a competitor, how to keep someone out, how to increase profits, but more about how to include other people, how to balance clean air and water with increased industrial production, how to build political coalitions to affect public policy for a better community. The new leadership does call for people to work harder, but much more it calls for them to work smarter, and to live smarter; leaders simply have to be more wide awake to new realities and new possibilities in the social drama.

Concern for what Giddens calls individual and collective ontological security might be another reason to reject the postmodern agenda and to stay with the *status quo*. The *status quo* may be unfair to some people, but at least things have edges and definitions to them. We know who and where we are.

Once again, this is to hear only half of Giddens' exposition. Our ontological security is a socially constructed and negotiated security. We reconstruct our ontological security in our everyday actions with others. Ontological security is not a given or a

guarantee. We achieve it every day. What the new leader has to help people understand is that they are already exercising the talent and creativity that sustains their ontological security — talent and creativity they can call on in refashioning that security in newer circumstances, in new relationships with people. Furthermore, exclusive concern with ontological security leads to stagnation and ennui. We need ontological security so that we can open up enough to some small dose of insecurity in exploring new relationships. It is ultimately in our best interests as human beings to increase our relationships and be enriched by the diversity of social encounters. Beyond that, our insistence on unjust social arrangements which sustain our advantage will eventually lead to real ontological insecurity when those advantages are taken away by force or by superior political influence.

The Leader as Educator

The above considerations about the attraction of the *status quo* lead us to our conclusion of this exploratory journey. The postmodern leader will spend much of the time involved in educating relationships with others. This does not mean that the leader will become an expert lecturer, handing out wisdom at the morning staff conferences. Rather it means that the leader sees his or her primary task as influencing the way people in the institution *see themselves* and *see what they have to do*. This means raising questions, challenging assumptions, asking for another opinion, looking beyond tomorrow's solutions to the larger challenge. The leader must become something of a Socratic gadfly, bothering people enough until they begin to think things through more thoroughly, discuss them together, take the time to appreciate the significance of what they are doing. The new leader must orchestrate a more intense and thorough-going group think. Creating what Habermas calls the ideal speech condition, the leader attempts to develop postmodern sensibilities, and an appreciation of a new anthropology so that constituents can integrate those insights into the technical and professional tasks of the institution.

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Finally, the leader must encourage the members to fashion a collective vision of where they should be going. This means spending a large portion every day engaging the minds and hearts of his or her constituents in examining how they are reproducing the *status quo* every day and how they might alter it in small ways to make the drama of their institution work better for the people it serves and who serve it. As they take up that task they are improving, in some small way, the larger social drama of history.

Note

1 Barnard, C. (1938) *The Functions of the Executive*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press.

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Chapter 8

The Education of Leaders

In *The Republic*, Socrates addresses the question of how a society should carry out the education of its leaders. His dialogue with his garrulous and quick-witted companions begins, interestingly enough, with a debate about the nature of justice, and only after an involved argument does Socrates get around to speaking about the education of leaders. He proposes that they will never understand justice until they see it manifested in its ideal form, in the just state. In order to conceive of the just state, they had to imagine what kind of education the citizens of such a state would require, as well as the education of its leaders. In their early years the future leaders would be educated with everyone else. That common education would provide the foundation for the society as a whole, through the nurturing of common values and collective identities as found in their traditions, their art, their mythology and through their collective socialization through group activities. As the rulers-to-be were selected away from the more ordinary youth, they would begin to receive more specialized education. That selection and specialization would continue into what we would consider early middle age, crowned by the study of philosophy. In the study of philosophy the leaders would come to understand how justice participates in Transcendent Goodness, and their contact with 'the Good' would enable them to govern the state virtuously and wisely.

Many would consider the ideal society of Plato's *Republic* too rigid and static for a modern pluralistic society. In Plato's scheme, everyone would have a place consistent with his or her talents. Children would be separated from their families at an

early age and processed through an education carefully dictated and monitored by the authorities. The authorities would decide who would be slotted into various types of life-work and who would go on to higher things. Most contemporary scholars would likewise reject Plato's identification of knowledge with virtue, and its corollary that the rulers, who through the study of philosophy had come to know 'the Good', would be the most virtuous of all the people.

Although these and other reservations lead us to reject Plato's proposal for the education of leaders, we are nonetheless faced with the very questions which he sought to answer. How should we select leaders? What kind of education would be best for future leaders? Can leaders for the human drama, leaders who maintain moral integrity and play genuine, authentic parts in the drama be formed, shaped, nurtured through some educating process? Or must we as a society leave it all to chance, allowing scoundrels as much access to leadership positions as they currently enjoy?

Discussions about the education of leaders will raise, of course, the question of elitist academies. This is a vexing question for colleges, and even for public schools who wish to promote high standards of excellence, and yet allow for a wide diversity of talent to be considered as material deserving the pursuit of excellence. In most countries there is a widespread assumption that the country's leaders will emerge from certain universities and academies. Tokyo University, Stanford University, Oxford, Cambridge, the universities of Paris, Toronto, Chicago, the Ivy League colleges and the military academies come to mind as examples of institutions often thought of as preparing leaders in a variety of fields. Yet, in these academies, what *specific* attention is given to preparation for the moral exercise of leadership?

As John Gardner suggests, leaders are selected and educated by the culture, the workplace, the system, the network.[1] This source of education and evaluation is indeed effective, but are these traditional sources totally adequate to provide the leadership needed for the renewal and transformation of society? Will those sources not tend to promote those leaders who simply reproduce the existing state of affairs? They may be outstanding

in reproducing the *status quo* with style and elan, with firm control and predictable precision. Their leadership, whether it is based on a clever way to squeeze good news out of the audit, on a sharp sense of how to eliminate redundancy in the institution, or on a genuine concern for improving worker morale, may nevertheless assume the basic legitimacy of standard operating procedures. How much of the selection and promotion of leaders is a self-serving activity of the ones doing the selection, self-serving in the sense of reinforcing their own values and judgments, their own positions of power and privilege? The response by the selectors, of course, is, 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it.'

Many would agree with Weber that leadership arises only in times of crisis. When things are relatively stable, societies tend to reproduce themselves, but they also tend to deteriorate. Unless societies produce leaders who promote the continuous regeneration of societal values and ideals, complacency with the *status quo* eventually brings about the crisis which, in turn, calls for the emergence of leadership — the leadership it had been smothering up to that point in its assurance that everything was fine. Societies become great when they can nurture the vision of greatness over many generations. It is in the best interest of societies, then, to promote the continuous education of leaders who will seek to marry the dreams of human fulfillment with the possibilities and issues of the present drama, even if it means airing out some of the musty corridors of power. Every society needs a continuous flow of leaders who will, to quote John Gardner (1963, *Self Renewal*, New York, Harper and Row), 'comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable.'

The education of leaders is an enormous topic, one about which others have already spoken.[2] Rather than repeat what I agree with in what they have said, I will apply the considerations developed in earlier chapters to the education of leaders, since those considerations seem muted or absent in the present literature.

Focus on Continuing Education

The most important place to develop leadership is with people who have already been promoted to positions of leadership.

Having been socialized into their present institutional cultures, they have manifested an energy and initiative and a talent for working with others at various earlier levels in organizations. These are the ones who offer promise for achievement in positions of greater responsibility. Furthermore, they already occupy positions of influence and authority which would enable them to initiate changes in the institution.

One place to begin such leadership development is in a university with one or more programs in leadership development. Whether a program issues a degree or not, it should be looked on as a continuing education experience. There should be no 'terminal degree' in leadership. Rather, such programs should be conceived as offering an intense developmental experience to people already exercising leadership, but who want to stretch themselves and their institutions toward a more ambitious vision of greatness. This kind of continuing education experience should place them with a group of similarly minded colleagues from a variety of fields and locales. A cohort of leaders who stay together through one, two or three years of seminars, courses and workshops develop the trust and cooperation needed to create a genuine learning community. The exposure to others of different persuasions, backgrounds and perspectives is known to be one of the best stimulants for growth.

The pedagogical formats of such a program should vary, from case-studies to debates, from simulations and role playing to team action projects, from reflective reading and synthesis papers to creative brainstorming of new institutional metaphors, from visits to a variety of creative institutional settings to presentations before public audiences. Whatever the pedagogical forms, the program should involve thematic components such as: the complementarity of action and structure; the charismatic center of institutional mission; a critique of the anthropology and rationality embedded in their institutional life; postmodern perspectives; the drama of institutional life; and the transformation toward a postmodern institutional life. These thematic program elements are briefly developed below.

The Duality of Structure and Action

Participants should be exposed to the challenge of structuration theory. That theory exposes them to the 'bad news' that they reproduce the condition in which they find themselves; it also brings the 'good news' that they reproduce the conditions in which they find themselves. Participants need to confront the reality that their work lives are spent coasting along, riding the repetitive routines of everyday life, allowing standard operating procedures to run the organization. This encounter with their own lassitude is intended to awaken them from the deep sleep which Goffman alludes to in his analysis of the repetitive reliance on familiar frames of reference in everyday life.[3]

Once they confront that tug towards mediocrity in everyday routines, they need to become aware, on the other hand, that what they do every day is extraordinary. Their management of such complex and variegated organizational tasks — even while sleep-walking through the day — is a remarkable feat. Beyond that, it is a moral accomplishment. They keep faith every day with their perception of the demands of social life in their institution. By and large they do not intentionally cheat, steal, or destroy in their reproduction of the institutional drama. They maintain it and prevent it from falling into chaos.

The lesson behind this theme is that the participants possess the ability and talent to make the organization run. Using that same ability and talent, they can make the organization run *better*. This should become clearer as they probe the meaning of the individual's power to affect the outcome of any episode or scene in the organizational drama. Through a variety of simulations and role-playing, participants can come to appreciate how that power can reasonably and effectively be put to use.

Charismatic Centers

Participants should be brought more directly into contact with their core values and beliefs, and with the core values and beliefs of the institution in which they work. They need to be able to articulate to one another what they want the institution to

become, and how that vision of the institution embodies something heroic or significant that can enlist the enthusiasm and commitment of all the members. They need to look at what in their institution blocks and hinders the expression of those beliefs and values — not simply the personalities involved, but more importantly the structural components of the institution which impede and smother those expressions. They need to make contact with the institution's and their own charismatic centers, and explore how those centers interface or work against each other. Through extended discussion, argument and debate, they can be challenged to come up with a well-articulated statement of their institution's vision, mission or purpose, which might provide the foundation for institutional renewal. Furthermore, they can explore a variety of conflicts in the institution which may be resolved or lessened by referral to the larger, overarching purposes of the institution. As they go through many of these exercises, they will be learning how to blend a teaching role with a leadership role.

Critique

Leaders need to realize that institutional life is a major source of alienation among members. Often large, impersonal and demanding conformity, institutions do not communicate a sense of knowing, or caring to know the individual person who works for them. Institutions can use people in totally instrumental ways, not respecting them as ends in themselves, but simply as means to achieve institutional objectives. Still further, institutions can actively discriminate against groups of people through subtle racial, age, gender or ethnic bias. Standards for hiring women, African Americans, older people, or physically-challenged persons, may be applied arbitrarily. On-the-job safety principles may not be uniformly enforced. Promotions and salary increases may be slanted in unfair ways.

If leaders are to be concerned with institutional renewal, then they must be encouraged to critique their institutions from top to bottom. Continuing education programs can raise these difficult questions, questions which inside the institution are

ignored or intentionally buried. Well-focused action research projects by participants can help to pinpoint sources of alienation, domination and injustice within the organization. Simulations of situations reflecting ideal speech conditions may be tried out. Ways of members becoming stakeholders within institutions can be explored. Teams can develop bridges between the more substantive values of the charismatic center and the instrumental rationality or the technical side of the enterprise. Long-range planning strategies might begin to be connected to proposed solutions of these critical shortcomings of the institution. Revisions of personnel policies might be undertaken. Instead of dwelling on the negative, the critique should be directed toward renewal of specific institutional features, by using whatever management and leadership strategies offer promise.

A Postmodern Sensibility

Along with the above critique, such continuing education programs should challenge some of the larger myths of modernity — the myth of rationality, of progress, of unlimited natural resources, of the individual as the source of knowledge and morality. Introduction to postmodern philosophers, scientists, economists and social theorists may provide a feel for the depth of the disenchantment with the promises of the Enlightenment and the modern world. Again, this would serve part of the task of shaking participants out of their complacency, their sense that their work was standing on the unquestionably solid ground of rationality and objective science. That drowsy complacency is being challenged on many other fronts — by environmentalists, by feminists, by historians of oppressed peoples, and by the headlines of the media announcing crimes of violence in the home and venality in the corridors of government and corporations.

What that exposure to postmodern thinking is intended to achieve for these would-be leaders is awareness of the deadly serious nature of the game they are playing. The possibility of even a modestly happy ending to the current historical moment

of the social drama is by no means guaranteed, not for those in power, nor for the insecure middle class whose fragile security is threatened by the shifting fortunes of the market and of government economic policies. In a postmodern world, the challenge to leadership is not so much to raise productivity of the factory or the agency; it is, rather, to secure even a modicum of trust in the ordinary structures of society, to maintain some institutional credibility, not by repeating false claims to legitimation, but by redefining the institution as a community seeking a new legitimation, a legitimation grounded in the pursuit of human values and community service.

In other words, those aspiring to leadership need to go through an intense disenchantment with their institution, with their society, and with themselves. They need to recognize the self-serving myths of science, rationality, progress, democracy, national security; the myths of happiness as consumption and recreation, of the benign effects of technology, and indeed of their own noble intentions: strong medicine, indeed. The point of this unmasking, however, is to bring the would-be leader back to a starting point: the starting point of choosing, despite what they know, to take up the task of leadership. A leader in the postmodern world needs a clear sense that nothing is guaranteed; that nothing, certainly, will be easy; that very little can stand up to scrutiny, except, perhaps, the ability of the human heart to overcome its own anxiety and alienation . . . sometimes. The new leader must understand that compassion will be needed as much as hope, humility as much as courage, dogged persistence as much as creativity, and lots and lots of laughter. Only then can leaders begin to win the trust of colleagues, and to enlist them in the struggle to reach beyond themselves in order to remake the social drama.

Leadership of the Social Drama

With that clearer sense of what is at stake, the new leaders will be ready to take up the analysis of public life as social drama. The analysis of institutional scripts will reveal how the human purposes of the drama are subverted. Institutional roles must be recast and new ones devised. As the institutional plot undergoes

transformation, the leaders' roles as players, directors, critics and stage managers may become clearer. In other words, they will begin to grasp the leadership agenda of renewing the social drama within their particular institution, as well as involving their institution in renewing the local and regional social drama.

In seeking to renew their institutional drama, leaders will need to re-examine the relationship between leader and the led. They will see themselves now as less important in the scheme of things than their constituents, for the constituents are the ones who will actually accomplish the work of renewal. The new leader must believe in the followers first, before the followers can be expected to believe in the leader. The leader must believe that in each of the members is a dream of making a difference, of contributing in some way to the beauty, the vitality, the hope of the world. The leader must believe that the members' search for meaning is very much tied up with their search for relationships with others, and to engage in some significant life-task. Through conversations which begin with his or her own admission of uncertainty, the leader will engage the others in talking about what it is that makes their work a human enterprise, and what it is that they can do to share those human qualities in their lives with others. Perhaps because they have come from a knowledge of oppression, women and minority candidates for leadership may be the most adept at beginning and sustaining these conversations. As the new conversations develop, the group may find themselves describing a new anthropology, a new sense of what constitutes being human.

Doubtless, there will be other, perhaps more practical components to such a continuing education of leaders. The above considerations would seem essential, however. To avoid such a thoroughgoing approach would probably leave these continuing education efforts at the level of fine-tuning the instrumental rationality of organizational life, with, perhaps, a new veneer of rhetoric to cover the bankruptcy of the *status quo*.

Who Will Be the Faculty?

This kind of program in continuing education requires a special faculty. Being one of those who earn a living teaching in a

graduate school that purports to deal with the continuing education of leaders, I can attest to the difficulty of such an enterprise. University faculties, especially in the social sciences, are grappling with a scholarly universe still dominated by positivism and empiricism. Moreover, the faculty of graduate professional schools must contend with university administrators who think of the graduate school of arts and sciences as the model for all graduate education. Field-based learning, student-initiated action research, team problem solving projects, independent learning episodes that break the mold of classroom contact hours — these do not fit the traditional arts and sciences model. Hence, in professional schools research tends to be carried out within the prevailing paradigms. Textbooks are legitimized exclusively by reference to reductionist empirical studies. Business schools, schools of public administration, other professional schools of law, education and social service may have a stray Marxist, feminist, or minority representative, but, by and large, any criticism of the *status quo* is pointed to fine-tuning the current floor model.

Even in universities whose intellectual climate is relatively open to alternative approaches to leadership education, it is difficult to bring individual faculty members to a group consensus on the basic issues and to a level of commitment to this approach to leadership development. Many have grown accustomed to teaching their courses in isolation from the concerns of the rest of the program. For others, it is much safer to keep graduate programs focused on intellectual discussions of the available research in the field. By and large, that research takes for granted the framework of the *status quo*. Research conducted by women and minorities that challenges the assumptions behind the *status quo* is as yet on the margin of most courses, and may be brought in for discussion in one or two classes during a semester's course. At best, those concerns make up the material for one elective course within a program requiring ten or fifteen courses.

Even with a nucleus of five or six professors who would be willing to develop such a program, there is the problem of time — time for discussion, for program development and for program promotion. In some cases, deans will provide some

release from teaching, or a foundation will support release from one or two courses. Release from the time demands of normal faculty responsibilities is essential if professors are to have the time to come to some reasonable agreement on the topics to be covered, the various pedagogies, the support materials, the development of criteria to evaluate outcomes of the program, and an overall program framework and imagery which would make a program intelligible and attractive to potential participants.

Were such programs to get off the ground in several universities, one would doubtless find considerable variations, reflecting the chemistry of the faculty at each university, the location, the pool of students available, and the interdisciplinary mix of the curriculum. In some universities one might find such programs in one or two graduate schools but not in others. In other universities one might find a single program which cut across all graduate schools, either as part of a degree program, or independent of a degree program.

What matters, of course, is that university administrators and faculty take a new look at the preparation of leaders. Presently most colleges and universities identify their mission as that of providing the future leaders of the country with a solid liberal arts education, topped off with some academic specialization. Beyond this broadly conceived mission, there is a need to consider a more highly focused effort involving more mature adults in the field. It also matters that leaders already engaged in renewal within a variety of fields — whether politics, business, civil service, or social service, to name a few — see the need to develop a new generation of leaders. There is a continuing need for in-house programs within institutions to carry on the development of the next generation.

Earlier Forms of Leadership Education

Again, the literature on leadership development in college and secondary school is extensive. Suffice it to say that schools and colleges need to attend to developing *leadership predispositions* in their curricula. Those predispositions would include, among other things, a mastery of the spoken word, a facility in debate

and discussion, an openness to a variety of points of view, a facility with and commitment to teamwork, a view of one's life-work as service, a strong belief in oneself coupled with a willingness to seek evaluation, a quest for some form of the heroic, and an ability to build consensus and coalitions. I would add to these predispositions one final conviction, and that is the belief that the world needs their best effort, and that indeed, whatever talents they have are gifts given to them to be used on behalf of the community. How these predispositions are to be developed can and should be left to educators at the various school levels, and to those non-school educators who engage youth in a variety of community-based learning experiences. Again, what is important is that we recognize the need to prepare a whole generation, not simply the few who get chosen to be captain of the squad, to be leaders. Only when a critical mass of that generation embrace leadership will the renewal of the social drama take on truly magnificent proportions.

Notes

1 Gardner, J. (1990) *On Leadership*, New York, The Free Press.

2 To mention a few, see Bass, B.M. (1990) *Bass and Stogdill's Handbook on Leadership*, New York, The Free Press; Bennis, W. and Nanus, B. (1985) *Leaders*, New York, Harper & Row; Gardner (1990); Smith, P.B. (1988) *Leadership, Organizations, and Culture*, Newbury Park, CA, Sage.

3 Goffman's comment is worth quoting: 'I can only suggest that he[sic]who would combat false consciousness and awaken people to their true interests has much to do, because the sleep is very, very deep. And I do not intend here to provide a lullaby but merely to sneak in and watch the way people snore.' Goffman, E. (1974) *Frame Analysis*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, p. 14.

Epilogue

When I finished this report on excursions into previously unexplored landscapes, I sat back and thought about what I had attempted. The questions that had previously bothered me were more satisfactorily answered. I can incorporate many new insights into my teaching of leadership. Faced with the normal anxieties of sending a book out to the public, however, I began to think how a reasonably informed reader would react to the book. Placing myself inside such a prospective reader, it seemed to me that I would have five complaints. Listing them here allows me to judge for myself whether the complaints are valid and how I might respond to them. The complaints are that I am too negative, too idealistic/optimistic, too emotional, too rationalistic and finally, that the book is incomplete.

The Book is too Negative

I am very hard on the modern world. I am very critical of institutions, accusing them of bias, irrationality, hypocrisy, social irresponsibility and collective self-seeking. Perhaps there is an unacknowledged anarchic ideology at play here, perhaps an over-extension of super-ego, perhaps an over zealous religious moralism. I will admit to feelings of alienation now and again towards most large institutions. On the other hand, I suspect that I am much more benign in my interpretation of bureaucratic motives than many of my contemporaries. The

exploration into critical theory may make me suspect as a possible neo-Marxist, but that is to give critical theory too much credit. Criticism of the robber barons and corporate scoundrels has been eloquently voiced by any number of critics of a wide variety of political persuasions. Reinhold Niebuhr, a fairly mainstream theologian with honorary degrees from a string of Ivy League universities as well as from Oxford and Glasgow, is much more outspoken than Habermas or Horkheimer on questions of corporate greed, upper-class arrogance, and political hypocrisy.[1] But yes, there are some negative assessments made in this book. If anything, they are understated. We need a certain realism in the treatment of leadership. The current literature on leadership seems entirely too sanitized and naive when it comes to looking at the messier side of human behavior.

The Book is too Idealistic/Optimistic

How can one be hopeful in the postmodern era? All social institutions are implicated in sustaining injustice and dishonesty. How can institutions, the source of problems, be the source of renewal and transformation? Ordinary people are not ready for social transformation; they are not interested in grand ideas. In a conflict between conscience and comfort, comfort always wins out.

I readily confess to idealism and optimism. While I agree with Niebuhr that

> most of the social scientists are such unqualified rationalists that they seem to imagine that men[sic] of power will immediately check their expectations and pretensions in society as soon as they have been apprised by the social scientists that their actions are anti-social.

I also agree with him that 'the inertia of society is so stubborn that no one will move against it, if he cannot believe that it can be more easily overcome than is actually the case.[2] It is precisely the role of leaders to hold out hope, to propose a dream of greatness. So yes, the book is idealistic and optimistic, though it is

also critical and cautious about naive optimism. It seems the two are obliged to go together.

The Book is too Emotional

There are times when the language gets too lyrical, too passionate, gets carried along on swells of feeling. Such outbursts can only blemish the scholarly character of the book. Stay with the facts, please, stick with objective knowledge. Don't let your feelings bias your analysis. The fact that other books on leadership occasionally slip into cheerleading should be no justification for such unbecoming lapses in an academic. Again I plead guilty. But they are lapses, not the primary foundation of my analysis. I feel strongly about the topic. There is a lot at stake. So I get emotional . . . a little.

The Book is too Rationalistic

The book falls into the rational trap it criticizes in those who would make management a science. You seem to think that if you can corral a group of administrators and executives into a university program and get them to *understand* what is going on beneath the surface and over the horizon of their awareness, that they will go out and put that understanding into practice; simply show them the *need* for a new type of leadership and they will become those new leaders. Isn't this the rational fallacy all over again?

I would argue that the rational fallacy is only a half fallacy. I believe that we have to deepen understanding, gain clarity of vision, broaden our appreciation of the issues. Leadership requires a lot of intelligence. To be sure, we have many an incompetent displaying his Leadership PhD diploma on his office wall. That does not disprove the need for knowledge and rational discussion, however. It simply means that leadership *also* requires passionate commitment to a dream, courage to face opposition and nastiness, a sense of humor to deal with disappointment and betrayal, and a sense of perspective to look

towards the long haul. I have no problem being accused of promoting rationality. My problem is with the exclusive and narrow use of instrumental rationality, and the rationalist's disavowal of the value of passion, love and heroic courage.

The Book is Incomplete

This is perhaps the most legitimate complaint against this book. Those who want the full treatment should read the third edition of the *Handbook on Leadership*.[3] For myself, the most glaring omission in the book is a fuller treatment of power. Though I dealt with power in the analysis of Giddens' theory, I have not yet mastered an adequate understanding of power in social life to address how leadership might function in a context of power. This relates to levels of power within the institution, and circles of power outside the institution. Burns deals with leadership and political power and offers much for reflection.[4] Others, like Etzioni and French and Raven, offer insightful distinctions on types of power, but I find something lacking in their treatments.[5] It probably has to do with the moral dimension of the use of power, but that is as far as I can go right now.

One can never say all there is to say between the covers of a book, and that is certainly true of this one. I will be happy if the book raises new questions for both scholars and practitioners and teachers of leadership. I will be happier if those scholars and practitioners and teachers take those excursions a bit farther than I was able to.

Notes

1 See, for example, Niebuhr, R. (1932) *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons.
2 Niebuhr (1932), p. xvii, p. 221.
3 Bass, B.M. (1990) *Bass and Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership*, New York, The Free Press.
4 Burns, J.M. (1978) *Leadership*, New York, Harper Torchbooks.

5 See Etzioni, A. (1961) *A Comparative Analysis of Complex Organizations*, New York, The Free Press; French, J.R.P. and Raven, B. (1959) 'The bases of social power', in D. Cartwright (Ed.) *Studies in Social Power*, Ann Arbor, MI, University of Michigan, Institute for Social Research.

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The Drama of Leadership

Robert J. Starratt
Foreword by Professor James MacGregor Burns

In a characteristic lively and informed way the author, himself a teacher of people in leadership positions, reviews recent developments in the study and theory of leadership, and explores previously uncharted terrain in the area. He looks at the questions which structuration theory raises for leadership, and goes further to explore the theories of charisma and critical theory as posing new challenges to our understanding of leadership. By exploring the challenges which postmodernism poses for leaders, he sets the stage for moving into a new theory of leadership, a theory illuminated by theories of drama.

Leaders are active players in a drama of human survival and fulfilment in a world threatened by irrationality and uncertainty. The leader is seen as playing the part of director, coach, script writer, player and critic in the developmental dynamic of institutional life. Based on this theory, the author proposes approaches to the continuing education of leaders.

Robert J. Starratt is Professor of Educational Administration, Graduate School of Education at Fordham University. He holds degrees from Boston College, Harvard University and the University of Illinois. He has published extensively, and has lectured in Australia, in various Asian countries and in Canada, as well as his native United States. He is actively involved in research in leadership theory and leadership training, as well as in ethical issues in education.

Cover design by Caroline Archer

ISBN 0 75070 091 2 cased
ISBN 0 75070 092 0 paper

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